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THE

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ELDER JAMES M. MATHES,

AUTHOR OF "WORKS OF B. W. STONE," "MORRIS LECTURES," ETC.

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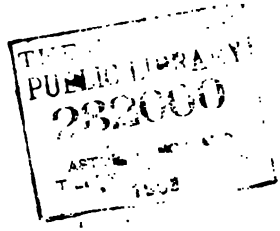

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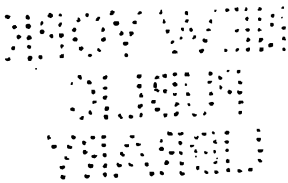

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PREFACE.

"Of making many books there is no end; and much study is a weariness of the flesh."—SOLOMON.

IT is true, that a great many books are being brought before the public, on almost every subject. And the reader may perhaps ask, Why add another to the list? We answer, The voice of the brotherhood demanded it. We have abundant evidence of this, from letters received from every part of the country. The work has been greatly delayed, beyond our original calculation, by a variety of causes, over which we had no control, and which we need not enumerate here, not the least of which has been the high price of everything entering into the manufacture of books. But we have brought it out, and now offer it to the public.

The WESTERN PREACHER is peculiar in one respect, at least. Other books of this class, as a general thing, are the work of one man; but this is the work of some twenty-five cultivated minds, and of course furnishes great variety, both as regards matter and manner, and covering nearly the whole ground of our common Christianity. In our judgment, it is just the book that every one would like to put into the hands of his neighbor and friend, to disabuse his mind in regard to the teaching of the Christian brotherhood, and enable him to learn the way of life and salvation, through Jesus Christ.

If this volume should be the means, in the hand of God, in leading sinners to repentance, and Christians to a more complete consecration of themselves to the service of God, we shall have attained our object.

And now, may the blessing of God rest upon the reader and enable him to peruse this volume with an unprejudiced mind, that he may be edified and strengthened in every good word and work!

J. M. MATHES.

SERMON I.

THE POVERTY OF JESUS THE WEALTH OF THE SAINTS.

BY D. S. BURNET.

"For ye know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that though he was rich, yet for your sakes he became poor, that ye through his poverty might be rich."—Cor. viii, 9.

In reading this verse, which is an independent formula of the Christian faith, perhaps proverbial during the apostolic era, thrown into the apostles' argument for benevolence to the suffering in Judea, I do not assume the obligation to discuss the grace of Christ as an isolated theme; I rather ask the attention of my auditory to that exemplification of it, embraced in the words "that though he was rich, for your sakes he became poor, that ye through his poverty might be rich." The whole subject was the inspiration of the prophets; the testimony and the glory of the apostles; the dying confession of the martyrs; and the anthem of all ages. The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, forms the staple of the prayers of the true Israel and the songs of Zion. It is the central truth of the gospel of every denomination; the common rock of a common salvation; the hope of the poor, the solace of the mourner, and the last refuge of the dying saint. It is but little we know of heaven, but the chief of that knowledge is, that Christ there, as here, is all in all, and all the riches of

glory are the riches of his grace and the fruits of his poverty.

But our theme is the poverty, the voluntary poverty of Jesus for the enriching of the poor. Here, as in many other cases, the passage does not say all that is meant. The something implied is as valuable as the words of the text. If Christ became poor to enrich any one, then were that one previously poor.

Here, then, we find the salient point of the discourse, the poverty—the pauperism of the world.

Men love not to be thought poor. Poverty is weakness, and "to be weak is to be miserable," even in the judgment of Satan, as quoted in Paradise Lost. American men are not poor. There never was a nation so rich in boundless resources and general distribution of wealth. The old world, with its moss-grown institutions, gives more frequent instances of overgrown fortunes, but no country has ever enjoyed such general prosperity. Travelers have complained of the leveling tendency of our institutions; to which it may be replied, that there are two kinds of leveling; leveling up and leveling down. Individual overgrown wealth tends to serfdom, but its distribution raises the masses; it levels up. The appliances of material happiness are unprecedented in their diffusion in this country. Can this people be poor, even if others are? Yes, vain man! It is not abundance that makes wealth. Can you balance your accounts with God and have a residuary fortune? You are brave now, but in the presence of disaster and in the prospect of the "eternal judgment," would you be ready for the reckoning? All the world are cowards here, "Conscience makes cowards of us all." Chaplains have told me that amid the din of battle, the rattle of musketry, the shrieking of shells and the roar of heavy guns, they could distinguish the cry for divine mercy from the battle cry. Never were foemen braver than the contending

hosts on the fields of Chattanooga, Antietam and Gettysburg; man was not afraid of man, but side by side, weltering in their gore, they were friends and companions in the common petition for mercy. Ah, friends, we are paupers all, if Christ has not enriched us with pardon and peace.

The true condition of faith in a sinner is to know this poverty and be prepared to receive the kingdom of heaven upon the principle of the first beatitude, "Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven." Thus much, is implied in the text. The statements now demand our attention.

"Jesus was rich." When? If every auditor should analyze his conceptions of Jesus, he will find that he never thought that the hero of the four gospels was rich; he always felt him to be poor. Whence then the statement that he "was rich?" It was a maxim of an old writer, "distinguish the times and the Scriptures will agree." Jesus *was*, but under another name, before he was the "child born, the son given," of the evangelical prophecy. The Baptist, the senior of Jesus, knew it, and humbly confessed it. "I am unworthy to untie his sandal, He is prefered to me, for he *was before* me." Jesus himself assumed his pre-existence in a coloquy with the Jews, "Abraham rejoiced to see my day; and he saw it and was glad." "Verily, verily, before Abraham was, I am."* In these words he not only proclaims that pre-existence, but affirms his own independence of time. "Before Abraham *was*, *I am*," is a solecism, a violation and defiance of rhetoric. To have said, I was, would have been grammar, but it would have been tame. He seizes the verb of being and appropriates the present tense of its affirmative mood. This is wonderful in the most accurate speaker who ever opened his lips. But when he twice and thrice carries the present

* John viii, 56–58.

time back and makes it an antecedent to a time then near two thousand years past, wonder rises above wonder. "Where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I;"* and, "Lo, I am with you to the end of the world."† Does not Jesus here appropriate to himself the name of Jehovah in Exodus iii, 14? Is he not the manifestation in flesh of the "I am?" Is there any other solution of this anomaly in his language?

The apostle of love, in the opening of his gospel, in which he developes the inner life and divine power of Jesus,‡ affirms, "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. The same was in the beginning with God All things were made by him; and without him was not anything made that was made." Here we have reached the main point in our preliminary discussion, the wealth of Jesus "in the beginning." He was God, was with God, made all things, and was the proprietor of all. Was it not well stated, then, that he was rich? There never was such title to wealth as his. You hold your property, my auditors, however good the title, under some one else; nor was that one's original. We all fall back upon the government, and it was a purchaser. The red-man-owner only is truly honest, who says the title is in the Great Spirit, in God. In John's abstract, he traces it to the Log-os,§ who was made flesh.

The Cicero of the New Testament, Paul the apostle, emulates John in the wealth of his description of our peerless Saviour. One sample will suffice, taken from the casket of his brilliants: "for by him were all things created that are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether they be thrones or dominions, or principalities or powers;

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* Matt. xviii, 20. † Matt. xxviii, 20. ‡ John i, 1-3.

§ As Log-os is a proper name, why was it translated, when Jesus and Christ, and God are merely transferred?

all things were created *by* him and *for* him."* The fabled Atlas of the ancients held the heavens on his shoulders; but more than the ideal Atlas "is here." Jesus first made, and then sustains, heaven and earth, visible and invisible, and all their hierarchies, and then sustains every atom, every sentient heart, and every grasping intellect. Dependent upon him, and his property, they owe to him the revenue of their entire fealty, the income of every power and every moment. Did our chemistry give us the number, varieties and affinities of every atom; did natural history unfold to us all seeds and plants, flowers and fruits, with the mysteries of their progress from seed to seed; did our astronomy number and define the starry suns, each of which is a system, disclosing to us its non-self luminous planets, too distant for our space penetrating glasses, unfolding the nebula masses, larger than that in which our sun and his planets play an inferior, though to us, a more conspicuous part; did our science reveal all sentient being, from the animalcule to whom a drop of water is a boundless ocean, to leviathan who disports himself in the Pacific, from the helpess infant man to the majestic Newtonian intellect, from a demon to the mighty Gabriel; all his creatures, with their several susceptibilities and powers, their relations to each other and to all—and all to him, their maker and proprietor; then, with the inspired enthusiasm of Paul, would you not, my hearers, say he *was* rich? Blessed be his name!

But in this inventory, or any one possible to be made of the wealth of the Logos, the most precious of all treasures is not to be found. There were no pardons in all the government of God. Heaven was the residence of purity and happiness, and hell was being prepared for the insurgent "devil and his angels." The love of God so boundless,

* Col. i. 16.

found a limit in this unnatural revolt against itself and perennial bliss, and as up to this time the seducer had found no victim, there was no call for mercy. She was yet unborn in the heart of God.

The scene has changed. In Bethlehem, near the inn crowded by luxurious votary pilgrims to the city of David, is a stable, now gorgeous with tapestry and gold, and glittering with diamonds, but then richer far, it held in the embrace of the lowly manger, a helpless infant of an hour, Mary's first born. This is poverty.

> "Cold on his cradle the dew drops are shining,
> Low lies his head with the beasts of the stall."

An infant is the most helpless of beings. The young of all the commoner creation are of greater strength and sooner suited to the world into which they are ushered. The fish at birth swims freely and seeks its food readily. The animal kinds are in a little time domiciled in appropriate homes and independent of maternal care. The bird soon fledged trusts itself upon the bouyant air and is all instinct with life and song; but the infant man, more exquisite in organization, and of slower development, is a constant care to the mother from whom it draws its nourishment as well as its life. Without an unfolded power, its life is bound up with that of the parent. How helpless! But for the indescribable affection, inexhaustible mines of which are hid in woman's heart, to be drawn out only by a child, the race would perish; but this wealth knows no diminution. "Can a woman forget her suckling child?" Over the cradle she bends by day and makes her bosom the cradle by night, often following the cherished one into an early grave, as the flower stem withers when the bud is too rudely snatched away. And was the Logos thus "made flesh?" Is this "the child born, the son given," who is to be the wonderful—the counselor? How poor!

Mary was of the royal line; she had the right to a palace; but for wise purposes, the legitimate royalty was in the dust. Seven centuries before, Isaiah in spirit had sung, "There shall come forth a rod out of the stem of Jesse, and a bramble shall grow out of his roots;" for the royal tree was prostrate, and the broken stem had only strength enough to throw out a branch. This infant, the denizen of a manger, "was of the seed of David according to the flesh," though reduced to the condition of beggary.

The incidents of his history which show the poverty of Jesus, are numerous and touching.

The law of Moses required that the first-born should be presented before the altar as soon as the mother's purification could be legally accomplished, that is, in about thirty-six days. The mother's sacrifice was a lamb of the first year for a burnt offering, and a turtle dove or a young pigeon for a sin offering. But if she were poor, the lamb could be omitted, and two birds, one for the burnt offering and one for the sin offering would answer instead.* At the time appointed, Mary appeared with the "Son given," attended by Joseph bearing two doves, birds of the olive branch, in appropriate attestation of their intelligent devotion and of their poverty. While the giddy crowd might be inclined to smile in invidious comparison with the gorgeous pageant of some more favored rich family present on the same pious errand, God put the seal of his approval on the poor woman's offering, for it was accurately legal. "And, behold, there was a man in Jerusalem whose name was Simeon; and the same man was just and devout, waiting for the consolation of Israel: and the Holy Spirit was upon him. And it was revealed unto him by the Holy Spirit, that he should not see death before he had seen the Lord's Christ. And he came by the Spirit into the temple:

* Compare Lev. xii, 6–8, and Luke ii, 22–24.

and when the parents brought in the child Jesus, to do for him after the custom of the law, then took he him up in his arms, and blessed God, and said, Lord now lettest thou thy servant depart in peace, according to thy word; for mine eyes have seen thy salvation, which thou hast prepared before the face of all people; a light to lighten the nations, and the glory of thy people Israel."—Luke ii, 25–32. And Anna, "coming in at that instant, gave thanks likewise unto the Lord, and spake of him to all them who looked for redemption in Jerusalem."

Upon a second visit to Bethlehem, the infant Jesus, then not two years old, received the homage and the treasures of the Magian sages from the east.* These men were undoubtedly descendants of Abraham by Keturah, through whom Abraham "was the father of many nations;" men who, retaining circumcision and much traditional knowledge of the patriarchs, shared in the general expectation of the deliverer. They saw the star in the east, and doubtless associated it with the "star of Jacob and the scepter which shall rise out of Israel" of the predictions of the son of Beor.† When the meteor had established itself as a permanent sign, perhaps of weeks, and began to journey westward, faster than the ordinary progress of the heavens, it is to be supposed they began their preparations for the visit of welcome. Much time would be required to commence and as much to prosecute a progress of pomp from eastern Persia to Jerusalem. This is obvious from the fact that the order of Herod to destroy the "innocents" younger than two years, was founded on the time of the appearance of the star.‡ The votive offerings usually laid at the foot of the throne of empire and at the

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* Matt. ii, 1–13, *Magoi* means more than wise men. It is literally magi—liberally rendered, philosophers of the Magian religion.

† Num. xxiv, 17. ‡ Matt. ii, 7.

shrine of the gods, were brought to Jerusalem, awaiting more accurate information of the residence of the new born king. The geographical and chronological prophecies were so explicit that the doctors of the law soon designated both the time and place, and their decision was at once confirmed, at evening, by the reappearance of the aerial guide in the lower atmosphere, and its change of route. Before the bright rays of the morning sun had overpowered it, it was standing over the humble lodging of the child Jesus. With the exultations of an "exceeding great joy," they hastened to open their caskets of gold, and frankincense, and myrrh. Whether we regard the painstaking offering of these Magi, their faith displayed, their endurance of privations, their defiance of Herod, or their far-seeing persistence in recognizing the Messiah in the midst of poverty and danger, the whole embassy is a wonder of miracle and a most instructive passage in the history of "the Son given, the wonderful."

But the principal purpose of the introduction of the episode of Matthew, the other biographers do not mention the Magi, is to notice the Divine recognition of Mary's poverty in so strange a provision for an emergency. A stranger, an Idumean, a son of Esau, now usurped the throne of Judea. This monster, misnamed Herod the Great, was moved, and all Jerusalem with him, for a formidable rival might be found in an infant, whose birth and birth-place so fulfilled the conditions of prophecy, and so stimulated Magian sages to make a costly pilgrimage to his cradle. The prodigy of the star was not less alarming to the king than to the whole distressed community, who feared the jealousy of a ruler under whose galling despotism they had groaned in mortal dread. The unconscious babe could be hid no longer, as portent after portent marked him out. The eastern treasures were just in time, and the Divine command to flee to Egypt, where the spices

were in demand for embalming, completed the circle of providences that saved the child Jesus, and further fulfilled the conditions of prophecy. From Luke ii, 51, who says that Jesus, after he was twelve years of age, "was subject unto" his parents, and Mark vi, 3, "Is not this the carpenter, the son of Mary, the brother of James?" etc.; and Matt. xiii, 55, "Is not this the carpenter's son?" it is obvious that Jesus learned and labored at his foster-father's trade; and as Joseph drops out of the history after the statement that Jesus was subject unto him, we may suppose that he died early, and the care of Mary and her younger sons, "James," the author of the epistle, "and Joses, and Judas, and Simon," and "his sisters," to some extent devolved upon him. He was of necessity and of choice a worker, giving to the youth of all generations a pattern of honorable industry, and conferring a dignity upon labor immeasurably above that which Peter the Great did by stooping from the throne of Russia to a blacksmith shop. During this period he was a creator of wealth, now using the human, as long before he had the Divine energy in creating worlds. But when he attained majority according to the law, an event occurred which gave a new direction to his energies. John had well nigh fulfilled his course. The unincorrigible had received his baptism in Jordan and at Enon, and as "all the people were in suspense, and all men mused in their hearts of John whether he were the Christ or not," Jesus himself demanded the common preparation for the kingdom of God, and was the first to enter into the new society, being greeted from the opening heavens by the Father as his only and well-beloved Son, as he arose from his baptismal burial, and was Christed by the Holy Spirit* the corner-stone of the kingdom of heaven. Thenceforth he is officially God's, and the world may not

* *Christos*, in Greek, means anointed, as does Messiah in Hebrew.

claim his physical labors. He never thereafter earned a penny. He ransomed a world!

He came from Galilee to Jordan. He was driven from Jordan to the wilderness, and roamed, like Adam the first, among the untamed monsters of those haunts, like Adam, to be tried by the same great seducer, but unlike our great progenitor, to conquer. He fasts! and when forty days are passed, famished and faint, he, the Lord of glory, is poor—so poor! and yet not so poor that he would take a loaf of bread from his foe till he conquered; and then angels ministered unto him.

From his baptism his life was one of privation. His contest with the Herodians brought out not only his admirable wisdom, but most touchingly his complete destitution. To decide their question and advance the double duty of man, "Render to Cæsar the things that are Cæsar's, and to God the things that are God's," he had to borrow a penny. Attired in the common dress of the people, and surrounded by a few admirers from among the unpretending denizens of the country, he had almost unlimited control of the audiences which were drawn to him by the unspeakable wisdom of his words, the majesty of his miracles, and the sweet dignity of his mein. In the crowd there stood a man absorbed and thoughtful. Strange visions flitted before his mind; new fountains were opened in his bosom, whence flowed faith and penitence. The hour of dismissal had arrived. He followed not the retiring mass, but pressing still closer upon the stranger, in tender tones inquired, "Teacher,* where dwellest thou?" The suggestion was a modest request to be his guest for the evening. The reply of the Son of Man has always seemed to me, brethren, the outburst of pent-up sensibilities. His hospitality—the wealth of the poor and the

* *Didaskale*—Teacher. Matt. viii, 18-20; Luke ix, 57, 58.

honor of the rich—had been appealed to. When he might have said, "Heaven is my throne and the earth is my footstool . . where is the place of my rest?"* he repressed the emotion, and meekly said: "The foxes have holes, and the birds of the air have nests; but the Son of Man hath not where to lay his head." This is deep poverty.

Here is a natural inquiry. If the Saviour devoted himself to the work of the Father, even to the denial of his mother's authority,† and if the apostles forsook all for him, giving him every moment and every energy, how could the thirteen subsist? For though he fed five thousand at one time, and four thousand at another, out of half rations for his own little establishment, he never created a loaf for his own or their use. Even in Samaria, shunned by every Jew, his disciples had to go into the city to buy food, while he hungered and thirsted by Jacob's well, and begged a cup of water of a sinful woman. The solution is found in the fact stated by the beloved physician, that Mary of Magdala, Joanna, wife of Chuza, Herod's steward, Susanna, and many others ministered to him of their substance.‡ This is the first Christian missionary society. Let not, therefore, any one devoted to the ministry of the Word feel himself humbled by the support of the brotherhood, when the Lord of all ministries, made himself dependent upon the grateful service of those whom he had relieved from the power of the evil one, having "healed them of evil spirits and infirmities." Glorious women! Precious charge! And the daughters of Israel have not altogether forgotten their example!

It may seem strange to some, that of all earth's tenantry Jesus should be the poorest, except during the period when thrown upon his own labor for support; born in a stable, a houseless wanderer, fated to the cross, and buried

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* Isai. lxvi, 1. † John ii, 4. ‡ Luke viii, 2, 3.

in a stranger's tomb! But there is inconceivable wisdom and love in providing a sorrowing and suffering world with a Saviour, whom the lowliest might know was lowlier than he. Son of a hard fortune, daughter of sorrow, know that thy Saviour rose to the top from a lower round of the ladder than where thou standest, and is set down at the right hand of God! "If, therefore, there be consolation in Christ, if any comfort of love, if any fellowship of the Spirit, if any bowels and mercies, fulfill ye my joy, that ye be like minded,"* repining not at thy hard lot, strive to attain a place at his side.

But poverty consists not merely in destitution of material comforts. He is poorer than a beggar who is deserted by friends. "A man's life consisteth not in the abundance of the things which he possesseth."† Many men of good intellect, fine attainments, cultivated taste, and a clean record, claim the society of the wise and great, and are the guests of princes, though they have not a dollar. But, six centuries before, it had been written, "Awake, O sword, against my shepherd, and against the man, my fellow, saith the Lord of hosts; smite the shepherd and the sheep shall be scattered."‡ Jesus was to fulfill a yet older pledge: "I have trodden the wine-press alone, and of the people there was none with me," and, "I looked and there was none to help, and I wondered that there was none to uphold; therefore mine own arm brought salvation unto me."§ When Jesus was arrested in Gethsemane, every disciple fled. Indeed, he provided for their safety in his surrender: "If ye seek me, let these go."‖ Judas betrayed him with a kiss, and Peter denied him thrice. Even the twelve legions of angels who hovered over him, were re-

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* Phil. ii, 1, 2. † Luke xii, 15. ‡ Zech. xiii, 7.
§ Isai. lxiii, 3, 5. ‖ John xviii, 8.

strained, and when one strengthened him, it was that he might endure yet greater suffering. O how poor!

But the depth of his humiliation had not yet been reached. I would, dear brethren, here drop the curtain and drop a tear, but the last scene in this drama of the wonder of love, more than any other, proves that he became poor for us. Through his whole ministry, he had "borne our sickness and carried our sorrows" by healing every malady; but now he was to "bear our sins in his own body on the tree." Though deserted by earthly friends, the angels and the Father yet were with him; but when the cross was "uplifted high" with its precious burden, "the Man of sorrows," and fell crushing into the hole in the rock, tearing his flesh on the cruel nails, and reducing every joint to a living agony; when the heavens frowned blackly on the scene, and the unsteady mount reeled to and fro like a drunken man; when the solid rock, less obdurate than the Jewish heart, rived into fragments, "none of the people were with him," even the devoted "women stood afar off;" then as the terrible thirst, that attends the death-sweat, came on him, he found no God, and cried out in the Syro-Chaldaic Hebrew, "*Elohe, Elohe, lammawh sebakthanee,*" My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me! A mediator must represent the interests of both parties to the reconciliation. He must make good all their engagements, but he must act without support of either. Therefore Jesus, Divine as his Father, and human as his mother, on the cross, between heaven and earth, was ALONE; the only one that has thus stood in all the universe of God. His poverty is complete. "He emptied himself." His sojourn in the stranger's grave was a repose. He had "humbled himself and became obedient unto death," that we might be ransomed from the domination of the terror of kings and "the king of terrors." The Jehovah, God of patriarchal manifestation and of Moses, and *Ho Logos* of

John, is the Jesus who became thus poor! Language is dumb!

"He dies; the heavens in mourning stood;
He rises by the power of God:
Behold the Lord ascending high,
No more to bleed, no more to die!"

When the Logos was dispatched from heaven he was rich in all the wealth of the material and spiritual universe, and in every administrative resource, except mercy. He now remounts the skies in glorified humanity, clad in the robes of grace, richer than before. He has coined his heart's blood into pardons. He has rolled the stone from the grave's mouth of human woe, and vindicated the right of man to return to the tree of life and hear the voice of God in the garden of delights. He has carried our flesh sinlessly through life and triumphantly through the grave.

"O death, where is thy sting?
O grave, where is thy victory?"*

The executive import and gracious purpose of the text, as far as examined, culminates in the words, "that we through his poverty might become rich."

Such voluntary poverty must have a purpose commensurate with the greatness of the sacrifice. The salvation of a world, alone, could demand such a sacrifice, "to the intent that now unto the principalities and powers in the upper heavens, might be known by the church, the manifold wisdom of God."†

In the dispensation of this dear-bought "grace of our Lord Jesus Christ," the beneficence of God is as transcendently manifested as in the work of the Son. There was but one Son-Saviour, one college of apostles, one commission to them to preach a common salvation by one gospel. The

* 1 Cor. xv, 55. † Eph. iii, 10.

faith which received it was one faith, and the church which received them was one church, instinct with life by one spirit and animated by one hope. There was one grace for all, one gospel for all, and one salvation for those who receive that gospel.

The first step toward our enriching is the feeling acknowledgment of our poverty, and full confidence in the ability and willingness of the Saviour, who has tasted at every fountain of our sorrows and overcome our foe, to bestow the pardon which he has purchased by the imolation of himself.

In our individual redemption, our personal worthiness enters not.

> "All the fitness he requireth,
> Is to feel your need of him."

It may prove fatal to some non-professing hearer to wait for preparedness to receive Christ. Such preparedness never was required, and every moment spent in efforts to attain it, is adding sin to sin. You are poor, a pauper, and Christ can enrich you. You have but to establish and feel your poverty and you are entitled to the gift of pardon and the largess of the Spirit. The salvation is of grace and not of works. You get a pardon, not make a purchase. No terms are imposed but such as are necessary to confer the blessings of Christ. Salvation is personal, involving the whole man, judgment, affections and physical structure, and therefore is proposed upon the terms of the commission, "He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved"—pardoned. "With the heart man believeth unto rightousness, and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation." "The word is nigh thee, in thy mouth and in thy heart, the word of faith of which we speak; that if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and believe in thy heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou

shalt be saved."* This is comprehensible, "in thy heart;" and communicable, "in thy mouth." Be wise, therefore, O sinners, and do not enact the part of the haughty Naaman, of Syria, who when he sought the aid of Elisha to cure his leprosy, with a great price in his hand, was wroth at the simplicity of the cure proposed, and "turned and went away in a rage." There was good sense and great kindness in the expostulations of his officers, who urged that "if the prophet had bid thee do some great thing, wouldst thou not have done it, how much rather then when he saith to thee wash and be clean?"† Abating his displeasure, he prudently dipped himself the required seven times in the sacred river, and "his flesh came again, like the flesh of a little child." Have faith as a grain of mustard seed; put your trust in God, in the only practicable way of trusting the Unseen; trust his word, and know thou that no word is trusted that is not obeyed.

"Can you doubt that God is love
Who thus calls you from above?
Will you not his word receive?
Will you not his oath believe?
See, the suffering Lord appears;
Jesus weeps—believe his tears!
Mingled with his blood they cry,
Why will you resolve to die?'

May I truly say of every hearer, "You know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ!"

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* Rom. x, 8, 9. † 2 Kings, v, 1–14.

SERMON II.

THE FIRST PETITION.

BY ISAAC BRRETT.

Thy Kingdom come.—Matt. vi, 10.

EVERY careful reader of the New Testament will have learned that the narratives of Matthew, Mark and Luke, are largely occupied with preachings and teachings concerning the Kingdom of Heaven. There are four distinct ministries—those of John, Jesus, the Twelve, and the Seventy—whose special object is, the announcement of a kingdom, heavenly in its origin and aims, soon to be established in the earth.* This approaching kingdom was the burden, not only of preaching and teaching, but of prayer, as will be seen in the language of the text. We assume here, what the limits of this discourse will not allow us to prove, that this kingdom denotes the spiritual reign of the Messiah—the Gospel dispensation; that we have the history of its formal establishment in the second chapter of the Acts of Apostles; and that its embodiment is found in what is afterward known as the Church of God. But while affirming that this petition had its immediate fulfillment in the notable events narrated in the second chapter of Acts, we are far from supposing that the spirit and scope of the prayer are confined to the occurrences of that Pentecostal season. It is important to estimate aright the value of that chapter, as furnishing the *starting point* in the authoritative announcement of the kingly power of Jesus, of the terms of salvation under his reign, and of the plant-

* Matt. iii, 1-12; iv, 17; x, 1-7; Luke, x, 1-11.

ing of that divinely organized society, to be thenceforth known as his church. But it is only the beginning. It is the germ of an institution which is to live through all ages—the *little stone* cut out of the mountain without hands, which is to become *a great mountain* and *fill the whole earth.** While, therefore, this petition had a meaning, on the lips of the original disciples, which it can not now have; we still regard it as a suitable prayer to be used by the intelligent Christian, in its wider scope, as embracing the grand objects of the reign of grace—the world-wide and age-lasting achievements of the kingdom of the heavens.

We design, in this discourse, to speak of the *nature* and *objects* of this kingdom, and of the *means by which these objects are to be accomplished.*

I. Touching the *nature* and *objects* of the kingdom of heaven, let the reader pause, and carefully peruse the second and seventh chapters of the book of Daniel. From these he will gather the following deeply interesting particulars:

1. This kingdom differs from the kingdoms of this world in possessing *a divine origin.* Its symbol is not an image made by human hands, but a stone cut out of the mountain *without hands.* The God of heaven was to set up this kingdom. In the seventh chapter, the symbol is not a beast rising out of a stormy sea, as with the brutal and monstrous tyrannies of earthly empires, springing from wars and revolutions; but *a son of man,* coming in the clouds of heaven, and receiving from the Ancient of Days, dominion and glory. It is therefore a spiritual kingdom, in opposition to earthly and carnal kingdoms; and is meant to redeem, elevate and glorify man, in opposition to the oppressive, corrupting and degrading tendencies of the kingdoms of this world.

* Dan. ii, 44, 45.

Upon the throne of David, and upon his kingdom;
To fix it, and establish it
With judgment and with justice, henceforth and for ever:
The zeal of JEHOVAH God of hosts will do this.*

At this time of bitter and bloody strife in our land, when all our confidence seems to be centered in military skill and prowess, and when, amidst the professed followers of Jesus, many are abandoning all hope of the conversion of the world by moral and spiritual forces; it is important to refresh our minds with the testimonies of the Spirit so clearly uttered in the predictions of the Old Testament, and the teachings of Christ and his apostles.

When Isaiah announces the establishing of the Lord's house, the rebuking of the nations, and the spread of peace and good will among men, he uncovers the source of this revolutionizing and regenerating power in these words: *For the law shall go forth from Zion, and the word of the Lord from Jerusalem.*† In like manner, in the eleventh chapter, when describing the king arrayed for his conquests: *The Spirit of the Lord shall rest upon him; the spirit of wisdom and understanding, the spirit of counsel and might, the spirit of knowledge and of the fear of the Lord.*‡ And after he has again set forth, in the most beautiful imagery, the universal reign of peace and holy brotherhood, he gives the reason of it in these words: *For the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the Lord, as the waters cover the sea.*§ The word of God is living.‖ The word of God is powerful. The word of God is eternal.¶ The word of God teems with the energies of spiritual life.** From the magazines of Jehovah's power, this means has been selected as the most perfectly adapted to the wants of human nature, and

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* Lowth's Isaiah, ix, 4–7.
† Isa. ii, 2–4.
‡ Isa. xi, 2.
§ ver. 9.
‖ Heb. iv, 12.
¶ 1 Pet. i, 24, 25.
** John vi, 63.

to the achievement of the great ends of the kingdom of Christ. The entire harmony between Old Testament prophecies and New Testament facts and teachings on this point, may be seen by the following statements:

1. We have already heard the Saviour affirm respecting his kingdom, that he came to establish it *by bearing witness to the truth.*

2. The mission of the Holy Spirit, for the conversion of the world, is likewise associated with the utterance of truth. He is called, therefore, *the Spirit of truth;* and the express promise to the apostles was, *He shall guide you into all truth.**

3. When our Lord sent his apostles forth to push the conquests of his kingdom, he bade them rely on the message of truth and grace committed to them, and on divine protection in its utterance. *Go into all the world and preach the Gospel to every creature.*† *Go teach all nations. . . . And lo I am with you always, even unto the end of the world.*‡

4. The first gift bestowed by the Spirit on these ambassadors of Christ was, *the gift of tongues*, that they might speak in all languages, the words of this life; and by the spiritual energy of the truth thus divinely communicated, they pierced the hearts of sinners, and turned them by thousands to the Lord.§

5. The kingdom of heaven is compared to a sower going forth to sow, and the *seed of the kingdom* is declared to be *the word of God.*‖ As rationally expect wheat to grow without seed, as to look for the fruits of the Spirit where the Word of God has not been received into the heart. The *germ of the harvest is in the living seed.*

6. The failure to save men is traced to a failure in con-

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* John xvi, 13. † Mark, xvi, 15. ‡ Matt. xxviii, 19, 20
§ Acts, ii, 1-41. ‖ Luke, viii, 11.

veying the truth to their hearts. *This people's heart is waxed gross, and their ears are dull of hearing, and their eyes they have closed, lest at any time they should see with their eyes, and hear with their ears, and should understand with their heart, and should be converted, and I should heal them.**

In view of these and kindred facts, we are bold to affirm that nothing is wanting to the conversion of the world, but that all men every where should hear, understand, and receive the Word of God, the gospel of salvation. It is the power of God to salvation to every one that believeth, to the Jew first, and also to the Greek. We can not here enter into an analysis of this word of life, to show its adaptedness to this great end. We throw ourselves on the broad declarations of Holy Scripture, and in the face of all the babbling philosophies of earth, and of all the trembling doubts of the professed people of God, declare that it is so, and must be so, and will inevitably prove to be so, *for the mouth of the Lord hath spoken it.*

But let it be carefully observed, that it is the Word of God, not on the printed page, but *in the human heart*, that is to achieve this result. We have not, therefore, fully met the inquiry as to the means of success in promoting the objects of this kingdom. There must be means and agencies to convey this Word to the hearts of men. These means are both Divine and human. It is impossible for us to know all the providential and spiritual agencies employed by the King to give free course to his gospel. We know that he has promised to be with the ambassadors of his reign unto the end of the world. We know that all the sufficiency, even of inspired apostles, was of God; that while, as spiritual husbandmen, they planted and watered, it was God that gave the increase. We know that they

* Matt. xiii, 15; see also Rom. x, 14–17; 2 Cor. iv, 3, 4.

were divinely guided into some fields of labor, and divinely restrained from entering other fields. We can readily perceive how vast a space is left for providential workings, and consequently for constant and earnest prayer, after all that belongs to human agency has been accomplished. Some nations may be so far sunken in sin and delusion as to be irrecoverable; the judgments of the Almighty can exterminate them. Other nations may be in an unfavorable condition for attending to the message of life; the Governor of the nations, by a train of mercies or of judgments, may prepare them to receive it. In the wide range of freedom that belongs to the human mind, there may be long and wide-spread reigns of falsehood and delusion; the earth may be deluged with error; but there is One who sitteth above the floods, and stilleth the raging of the seas, who will, after long patience, cause the waters to abate, and stretch the bow of peace over a redeemed world. Human tyrannies may forbid the spread of truth; ecclesiastical despotisms may banish the light, imprison the saints, and threaten to annihilate the kingdom of God; but *He that sitteth in the heavens shall laugh; the Lord shall have them in derision.* The Word of God is not bound. The truth never pauses. In God's own good time these tyrannies crumble to the dust, hoary systems of error sink into contempt, and the Word of God comes forth from its banishment to live and abide forever. The same principles of the divine government which we recognize in his dealings with nations and ages, are applicable likewise to communities and to individuals. So that, in all cases, we may have the cheering assurance that Christ is with his truth and with its advocates, and that *greater is he that is in us, than he that is in the world.**

* 1 John iv, 4.

Let us look now at the human instrumentalities to be employed in the salvation of the world.

In the divine arrangement, the Church is to be the light of the world. To her members—to all of them—is given the solemn charge of holding forth the Word of life. In the primitive Church, there were special gifts and extraordinary offices, to meet the exigencies of the Church's infancy; but these were only *until* the weakness of infancy was outgrown, and the means of grace were perfectly developed.* Jesus taught his disciples that they were to be the *light of the world* and the *salt of the earth.*† Paul taught the Philippians that they were *to shine as lights in the world, holding forth the word of life.* Peter taught Christians that they constituted a royal priesthood, a chosen race, a peculiar people, for this very purpose, that they might *show forth the praises of him that called them from darkness into his marvelous light.*

This they were to do,

1. *By the testimony of a holy life. Let your light so shine, that others seeing your good works may glorify your Father who is in heaven*‡. *And ye became followers of us and of the Lord, having received the Word in much affliction, with joy of the Holy Spirit; so that ye were examples to all that believe in Macedonia and Achaia. For from you sounded out the Word of the Lord, not only in Macedonia and Achaia, but also in every place your faith to God-ward is spread abroad, so that we need not to speak anything. For they themselves show of us what manner of entering in we had unto you, and how ye turned from idols to serve the living and true God.*§ *Do all things without murmurings and disputings, that ye may be blameless and harmless, the sons of God without rebuke, in the midst of a crooked and per-*

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* Eph. iv, 11–16.
† Matt. v. 13, 14.
‡ Matt. v. 16.
§ 1 Thess. i, 6–13.

*verse nation, among whom ye shine as lights in the world, holding forth the Word of life.** *The kingdom of God is not meat and drink, but righteousness, peace, and joy in the Holy Spirit. For he that in these things serveth Christ, is acceptable to God, and approved of men.*†

2. *More particularly, the union, harmony, and love of the saints* is to win the world to Christ.

I pray . . . that they all may be one; as thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee, that they also may be one in us, that the world may believe that thou hast sent me.‡ So peculiar to the religion of Jesus is the spirit of love and peace, that he has made this the badge of discipleship: *By this shall all men know that you are my disciples, if you have love one to another.*§ The spirit of the world is a spirit of selfishness; and its bitter fruits are unrighteousness, oppression, anger, hatred, envy, malice, revenge. The spirit of Christ is a spirit of love, and its blessed fruits are righteousness, kindness, forgiveness, meekness, and active benevolence. To subdue the enmities and rivalries of Pharisee and Sadducee, of Jew and Samaritan, and unite them in harmonious association, was a heavenly work, and carried with it great converting power. To unite Jew and Gentile in one body, and bring together Pharisee, Sadducee, Samaritan, with Epicurean and Stoic, Roman and Greek, Barbarian and Scythian, bond and free, eliminating all the elements of discord, and binding in affectionate and happy brotherhood, men of all creeds, ranks, and conditions, was indeed a miracle of grace, which more than all else attracted the hearts of men to the Gospel. Nor was this a merely theoretical oneness. While there were occasional outbreaks of an evil spirit, it is evident that the primitive Church was animated by such a love, and marked by such a unity of spirit as had never been seen before. There was *one*

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* Phil. ii, 14–16. † Rom. xiv, 17, 18. ‡ John xvii, 21. § John xiii, 35.

*Lord, one faith, one baptism, one body, one spirit, one hope, one God and Father of all.** In the unity of interest and affection, which belonged to the primitive Church, there were the most beautiful and touching and captivating displays of the sentiment of brotherhood, in the maintenance of the poor, sympathy with the suffering, relief of those who were in bonds, and even in laying down their lives for one another. So long as a deep spiritual life pervaded the Church, and the spirit of sect was subjugated by the spirit of love, the onward marches of the soldiers of the cross were marked by a succession of gorgeous triumphs of grace. The gods of the nations fell before the cross, like Dagon before the Ark of Jehovah. Temples were forsaken, altars crumbled, and the hoary superstitions of ages, more extensive and powerful than even the political despotism of the Roman empire, tottered to their foundations. The world seemed already to lie prostrate before the spiritual potencies of the kingdom of heaven. But when prosperity gave birth to pride, and pride gave birth to sects, and sects gave birth to anger, strife, and every evil work, the glory departed from Israel. Lured by the attractions of heathen philosophy, enticed by the smiles of worldly friendship, the heroes of the faith were lulled to sleep in the lap of the Delilah of earthly pride; and there, shorn of their strength, and robbed of spiritual vision, they became blind and foolish, and helpless. Let the fearful lesson be well considered. Selfishness, pride, and sectarian strife are the brood of perdition; Satan is their father, and hell their native air. Love, humility, and holy brotherhood are the fruits of the Spirit of God. They only can successfully labor for the conversion of the world, who are one with Christ, and one with each other, and who develop the spiritual life which they have received from

* Ephes. iv, 4–6.

God in brotherly affection and in a world-wide philanthropy.

3. A third means of extending the triumphs of the cross, is *the maintenance of the order and worship of the Church.* All the ordinances and appointments of the Lord's house are means of grace—ministrations of light and life. Prayer, praise, preaching, teaching, exhortation, the Lord's Day, the Lord's Supper, together with the social sympathies and affections continually cultured in a well-ordered church, furnish heavenly influences for the salvation of the sinful. *The Spirit of God operates not only through the word spoken, but through the whole harmonious life of the body which that Spirit animates.* Thus the Church becomes *the pillar and ground of the truth.** Of the churches in Judea, Galilee, and Samaria it is said, that *walking in the fear of the Lord, and in the comfort of the Holy Spirit, they were multiplied.* And to the church in Corinth, Paul says, that if they faithfully perform the functions of a church, the unbeliever *is convinced of all, is judged of all; and thus are the secrets of his heart made manifest; and so falling down on his face he will worship God, and report that God is in you of a truth.*† No one can honestly pray, in the spirit of this petition, *Thy kingdom come,* who does not, to the extent of his ability, contribute to the vigor and energy of the church of which he is a member, to make it a center of living and loving influences, whence light and love may radiate to the community round about.

4. That on which the Scriptures lay most stress, for the conversion of the world, is *the public preaching of the Gospel.* This is the most popular and efficient means of promoting the blissful objects of the reign of the Messiah. *Go into all the world, and preach the Gospel to every crea-*

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* 1 Tim. iii, 15. † 1 Cor. xiv, 24. 25.

*ture.** *It hath pleased God by the foolishness of preaching to save them that believe.*† How *shall they believe in him of whom they have not heard? and how shall they hear without a preacher?*‡ Accordingly we find the church in Jerusalem sending Barnabas to Antioch;§ and Antioch sending out Paul and Barnabas through an extensive region of country;|| and the disciples, when driven from Jerusalem, *went everywhere preaching the Word.*¶

Whether this shall be accomplished by the individual efforts of those to whom the Lord opens the way, or by the benevolence of a single church, or by a combination of the means of two, or fifty, or a thousand churches, must be decided on the ground of *expediency*, and not on the basis of a divine prescription. In a religion meant for all the world, there can be but few positive statutes. We are under *a law of liberty.* Much must be left to the judgment of the children of God, in every age and in every country, so far as matters of expediency are concerned. And if we are only studious not to trench on the few positive statutes that are given, if we duly respect the general sentiment of the Church in all expedients, and are careful to violate the Christian liberty of none of our brethren, there can be no danger in voluntary associations of Christians in a neighborhood, county, state, province, or nation, to further the aims of the kingdom of God. The matter of greatest moment is *the possession by the Church of the genuine missionary spirit.* If there is that deep and earnest consecration to the work of the Lord which distinguished the Jerusalem church, which led her members to give up all their property for the work of Christ,** which made preachers of her deacons,†† and which finally sent out the

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* Mark xvi, 15 † 1 Cor. i, 21. ‡ Rom. x, 14.
§ Acts xi, 22. || Acts xiii, 2, 3. ¶ Acts viii, 4.
** Acts ii, 44, 45, and iv, 34–37. †† Acts vii, 2, and viii, 5.

mass of her membership to preach the Word of life;* we should not be long troubled about the necessary expedients. Money, personal influence, learning, talents, and labor would all be "willingly offered;" the Church would have her messengers in every scene of degradation and suffering, her colporteurs in every lane and alley, and on every highway; her tracts and sermons in every house; her preachers in every city and wilderness, in the islands of the sea, and at the ends of the earth, praying, *Thy kingdom come*, and laboring in the spirit of the prayer.

Has it ever struck your mind, that when our Lord taught his disciples to pray, *this was the first petition he taught them?* He thus instructed them that the kingdom of God was to be *first* in their thoughts and desires. Not even their daily bread was to be sought until they had first prayed *Thy kingdom come.* Ah, my brethren, how far have we wandered from the pure spiritual loves and aims of our Saviour's teachings? How entirely have we been immersed in the cares and ambitions of earth! Who makes the kingdom of heaven *first* in his *thoughts*, *first* in his *prayers*, *first* in his *plans*, *first* in his *offerings?* We toil for wealth, and excuse ourselves from the toils of the kingdom on the score of business necessity! We use our wealth to minister to the lusts of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, and give whatever fragments we can spare from such purposes, to advance the interests of the Church! We bestow the strength of our days for earthly self, for political ambitions, or social position; and have scarcely time amidst our feverish excitements and carking cares to pause long enough to utter with thought and heart even this short prayer—*Thy kingdom come!* How few hearts are burdened with the weight of this mighty enterprise for the salvation of the lost! How few

* Acts viii, 4.

know the fellowship of the sufferings of Christ—and how few consequently know the power of his resurrection! We do not doubt that there are many thousands who have not bowed the knee to Baal, and we do not, therefore, use the language of despondency. But when we see where our blessed Lord places the interests of his kingdom—in the front rank of all interests and of all prayers, we can not but raise a voice of earnest admonition, that we may be awakened to a more entire consecration to the service of the King.

Reader! Are you a citizen of the kingdom of heaven? Have you, by *a birth of water and of the Spirit*, entered into the kingdom of God?* Do you enjoy the peculiar treasures of this kingdom—*righteousness, peace, and joy in the Holy Spirit?*† *Being delivered from the power of darkness*, and *translated into the kingdom of God's dear Son*, have you been made *meet for the inheritance of the saints in light?*‡ Do you rejoice in the assurance that you are no more a stranger or foreigner, but *a fellow-citizen with the saints, and of the household of God?*§ How great the grace! how rich the mercy! how exalted your honors! how cheering your hopes! All your durable treasures are laid up in this kingdom. All earthly powers will be shaken, but the kingdom of God *can not be moved.*|| In this kingdom every citizen is a king and a partner of the throne of the King eternal. He can not fail. He can not perish. He will be more than a conqueror here; and glory, honor, and immortality await him in the heavens! His ransomed nature is destined to the brightest and the noblest fame that a created intelligence can possess. Blood-bought, toiling, heroic, victorious, glorified human nature—it is, in all the universe, the grandest monument of heaven's wis-

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* John iii, 5. † Rom. xiv, 17. ‡ Col. i, 12, 13.
§ Eph. ii, 19. || Heb. xii, 28.

dom and grace, and is worthy to stand "nearest the throne and first in song." I need not ask you if you are grateful for your inheritance, happy in your privileges, and joyful in your hopes. I will not insult you with the question if you could be induced to sell your immortal birth-right for any mess of pottage this life can afford? But let me ask you whether you may not be *more* grateful, and enlarge your own joy by an increased devotion to the work of the Lord? Jesus has done great things for you, my brother! He gave all—*all* for you and for me; became a slave, a felon, and drank the bitterest cup of death ever pressed to human lips, for our salvation. Have we given *all* for him—*all?* Have we kept back no part of the price? Are wealth, influence, mind, heart, tongue, and hands freely consecrated to his service? Is his kingdom more than daily bread to us? Let us never feel at ease until we are sure that this is the first petition of our hearts—*Thy kingdom come:* a prayer never to cease until *the kingdoms of this world become the kingdoms of our Lord and of his Christ, that he may reign for ever and ever.*

SERMON III.

FUNERAL SERMON OF FLORENCE MATHES; PREACHED AT MT. TABER, HENDRIX CO., IND., JUNE 5, 1864.

BY ELIJAH GOODWIN.

Blessed are they that do his commandments, that they may have right to the tree of life, and may enter in through the gates into the city.—Rev. xxii, 14.

JUST seven years ago at this hour, I stood in this pulpit, and delivered a public discourse in memory of our beloved, departed brother, Jeremiah Mathes. Then I saw before me, in the deeply afflicted and weeping audience, an aged mother in Israel, in whose cheeks the tooth of time had made long furrows, and whose head was white with the frost of many winters. That weeping sister was the bereaved companion of him in whose memory I then spoke. But I see not that dear mother before me to-day. Ah no! she too has passed away; she has ceased from her labors; her weary body now rests in the cold damp grave, and we, my friends, are assembled to-day to pay a last tribute of respect to her memory. Yes, sister Florence Mathes is no more among the living on earth. She now "rests from her labors, and her works do follow her."

Our sister's maiden name was Cameron; she was born March 9, 1785, and died January 18, 1864; hence she only lacked one month and twenty-nine days of being seventy-nine years old. More than sixty years of her long life she spent in the service of our common Lord and Master, to the best of her understanding of God's will. She first united with the Baptist church at Harrod's Creek, in Oldham county, Ky. She remained a faithful member

of that denomination about twenty years, but some forty years ago, becoming acquainted with a people who discarded all human creeds, and unscriptural names, she united with them, taking the name Christian, as her only church name, and the Bible as her only religious creed. But when it was discovered that among that people some of the ordinances of the Lord's house were neglected, while they practiced some things that were unauthorized by her creed—the Bible—and some of the brethren made a new effort to restore the ancient order in the church, she was among the first in Indiana, to join in that effort, and thus she became identified with the great reformatory movement of the nineteenth century. Thus she served the Lord faithfully, and died triumphantly in full hope of eternal life. Before her demise she selected, as the text from which her funeral sermon should be preached, the following words:

"Blessed are they that do his commandments, that they may have right to the tree of life, and may enter in through the gates into the city." Rev. xxii, 14.

Doubtless her mind had long rested upon the glorious beauties of the celestial city, and being deeply imbued with the spirit of Him who is the glory and light of that metropolis of the universe, she longed to be there. But let us now turn our attention to the text, and the circumstances under which it was first announced

As soon as the gospel of Christ began to be preached, and men became obedient to the faith, and formed themselves into worshiping congregations, Satan, with all his allied forces of earth and hell, took counsel together against the Lord and his anointed, and sought the destruction of the church of God. The apostles of Christ became the first object of their cruel malice, most of whom died by the murderous hands of these wicked persecutors. John, the beloved disciple and apostle was apprehended by

these enemies of the truth, and exiled to the island of Patmos. While there, separated from his brethren, and the assemblies of the saints, the Lord recompensed him for all his sufferings by making him the medium of some of the most sublime and glorious revelations ever vouchsafed to mortal man. He says:

"I was in the spirit on the Lord's day, and heard behind me a great voice, as of a trumpet, saying: I am Alpha and Omega, the first and the last; and what thou seest, write in a book, and send it to the seven churches which are in Asia. And I turned to see the voice that spoke with me. And, being turned, I saw seven golden candlesticks, and in the midst of the seven candlesticks one like unto the son of man, clothed with a garment down to the foot, and girt about the breast with a golden girdle. His head and his hair were white like wool, as white as snow, and his eyes were as a flame of fire, and his feet like unto fine brass, as if they burned in a furnace, and his voice as the sound of many waters. And he had in his right hand seven stars, and out of his mouth went a sharp two-edged sword, and his countenance was as the sun shining in his strength."

Such was the introduction of the beloved apostle, to the most stupendous and far-reaching revelations that were ever manifested to earth's inhabitants—revelations in reference to things that had been, then were, and which were yet to come. Many of these divine communications were presented in symbols of the most astonishing character, much of which I have never professed to fully comprehend. The whole length of the stream of time, with all its tremendous events seem to have been spread out before his inspired vision, like one grand panorama. Kingdoms and empires rose, flourished, decayed and disappeared before him; sometimes in the form of domestic animals, and then again, in the form of unheard of sea

monsters, with many heads, and multitudes of crowned horns. The church also in its primitive glory, its apostacy, and final triumph, is represented in the mighty vision. As the grand panorama unrolled before him, he saw the enemies of Christ destroyed, the earth purified, and the tabernacle of God established among men. Finally, the city New Jerusalem descends from God out of heaven, prepared as a bride, adorned for her husband, and stands before him in all its glory, loveliness and beauty. Then he heard the voice of the holy angel that showed him these things, saying:

"Blessed are they that do his commandments, that they may have right to the tree of life, and may enter in through the gates into the city." That is, into the glorious city which God, in the spirit had showed him.

Now, that we may appreciate the importance of being prepared to enter into this city, let us look for a moment at the description of it as given in this grand vision.

1. The size of the city. It "was four square; the length, breadth and hight were equal." Each side was twelve thousand furlongs; or fifteen hundred miles. This makes the city cover 2,250,000 square miles of the earth's surface! Then it is said that the hight was equal to its length, so it must be fifteen hundred miles high; that is the hight of the walls, and it is presumable that all the buildings were of equal hight. This will give 3375,000,000 cubic miles which the city contained. Then think that each building in the city would allow 480,000 stories each one rod high, and you begin to form some idea of the vastness of the city of our God.

2. The materials of which the city was made next claim our attention. "The building of the wall of it was of jasper." Dr. A. Clark says: "The oriental jasper was exceedingly hard, and almost indestructible. Pillars made of this stone have lasted some thousands of years, and

appear to have suffered scarcely anything from the tooth of time." Some species of this stone are of a sea-green color. "The city had twelve foundations, all garnished with the most precious stones. The first was jasper, the second sapphire." This is a stone of a fine blue color, next in hardness to the diamond; it will bear a very fine polish. The third foundation was a chalcedony. This is among the precious gems. There are four species of this stone, varying in color, some bluish white, some a dull milky color; some brownish black, but the most beautiful is yellow and red. This is the most valuable.

The fourth foundation was an emerald. This stone is of a bright green color, and is the most beautiful of all gems. The fifth foundation was *sardonyx*. This is of a bluish white color, mixed with red. The sixth was of sardius. This is a precious stone of a blood red color. The seventh *Chrysolite*. This is called the gold stone; it is of a dusky green with a yellow cast. The eighth a beryl, which is of a bluish green color. The ninth was a topaz, of a pale green, with a mixture of yellow. The tenth a *crysoprasus*, called by some the yellowish green and cloudy topaz. It is said to differ only from the chrysolite in having a bluish hue. The eleventh foundation was of jacinth. This is a precious stone of a red color, with a mixture of yellow. The twelfth was an *amethyst*. This is a precious gem of a purple, or violet color, composed of a strong blue and deep red. Such are the materials of the foundations of this glorious city. How are these twelve foundations arranged? may be a question. Let it be further suggested, that to this city there were twelve gates. Some think that these foundations reached from gate to gate. Some suppose that these foundations were merely the foundations of the gates, the threshold. I think, however, that these were literally twelve foundations, on which the main wall rested; that the stones composing these foundations were

laid up on each other, one round of one kind of stone, and one on that of another kind, and so on until the twelfth was reached. Thus we have twelve foundations in one. What a magnificent appearance this wall and its foundations must have presented. These stones being perfectly polished, and laid in mechanical order, and upon this grand foundation a wall of pure jasper, rising fifteen hundred miles high, would dazzle human eyes to behold. See all these colors; the sea-green, the blue, the variegated yellow and red, the bright green, the blood-red, the dusky green with a yellowish cast, the bluish green, the pure yellow, the yellowish green, and the purple, all tastefully arranged; what a sparkling sight! what dazzling splendor!

Then consider the gates; three on each side, and every gate a solid pearl. A literal pearl is a white, hard, shining body, usually roundish, found in a testaceous fish of the oyster kind. But the term is often used figuratively, to represent that which is clear and shining, as pearl drops of dew. These gates, then, must have been clear, shining white, as pure as the literal pearl. On the twelve gates were written the names of the twelve tribes of Israel, and on the twelve foundations were inscribed the names of the twelve apostles of the Lamb; "And the street of the city was pure gold, as it were transparent glass." The apostle further informs us that he saw no temple in this superb and glorious city: "For the Lord God Almighty and the Lamb are the temple of it." The angel then showed unto the apostle "a pure river of water of life, clear as crystal, proceeding out of the throne of God and of the Lamb. In the midst of the street of it, and on either side of the river, was the tree of life, which bare twelve manner of fruits, and yieldeth her fruit every month, and the leaves of the tree were for the healing of the nations."

3. As a third attraction connected with this city, we

may notice the character and enjoyments of those who dwell therein. "The nations of them who are saved shall walk in the light of it; and the kings of the earth do bring their glory and honor into it—they shall bring the glory and honor of the nations into it. And there shall in no wise enter into it anything that defileth, neither any that worketh abomination, or maketh a lie; but they who are written in the Lamb's book of life." It is further stated that "in this beautiful city the servants of God shall serve him; and they shall see his face, and his name shall be in their foreheads; and there shall be no night there; and they need no candle, neither light of the sun; for the Lord God giveth them light; and they shall reign forever and ever."

Such, my Christian friends, is the description of the city named in our text, and of the character and blessedness of those who shall be permitted to enter therein. Many opinions have been entertained by good and great men, as to whether this is a reality or figure; whether the Lord will bring down from heaven just such a city as is here described, and locate it upon this earth, after it shall have been purified by fire; or whether it is only an emblem or symbol of the glorified state of the redeemed—I incline to the latter opinion. If sea monsters, with many heads and crowned horns, as seen in these visions, symbolized kingdoms; if waters represented peoples and nations; if a woman crowned with stars, having the moon under her feet, symbolized the Church; if the scarlet-colored woman, called the mother of harlots, represented the apostacy; I say, if all these things which John saw were figurative, and not real, I think we are safe in concluding that this splendid city, with all its magnificent beauties, is a symbol of the glorified state of God's elect. This view does not detract from the worth of heaven, nor should it lessen our anxiety to reach that blessed state. Symbols never equal

the things symbolized. The spirit of inspiration never uses a mountain to illustrate a molehill, or eternal life to represent a moment of time. If the splendid city we have been considering, with its jasper flashing walls, fifteen hundred miles high, inclosing two million two hundred and fifty thousand square miles, with its twelve foundations of polished stones of every hue and color, with its golden streets, its pure river of water of life, shaded on either side with the tree of life, bearing twelve manner of fruits, whose leaves are for the healing of the nations, and in which is the throne of God, whose glory eclipses the glory of sun, moon, and stars; I say, if all this is but a symbol of the heavenly state, what, O what must the reality be! and what must it be to be there! Weeping friends, and Christian brethren, such is the state to which your aged mother, our departed sister has gone. Shall we weep for her? We know it is hard to give up one so dear; still, we sorrow not as those who have no hope of entering into the holy city of our God.

But while we contemplate the glories of the New Jerusalem, the question comes up in every mind: "Lord, who shall enter that happy state? who shall dwell in thy holy temple?" The answer is in our text: "Blessed are they that do his commandments, that they may have right to the tree of life, and may enter in through the gates into the city." Then, it all depends on doing the commandments of God; this gives a right to that city. Not that any one can purchase heaven by good works. We can merit nothing of God, for "The earth is the Lord's and the fullness thereof." The heavens also are his, with all that they contain; He is the Lord of heaven and earth, the God of hosts, and has a just right to all the services of men and angels, for he made them for himself. Still, he has prepared for them a city, and has suspended their admittance into it upon obedience to his revealed will.

This obedience is not for his profit, but for our good. The course of obedience which the Lord requires in order to our entrance into the heavenly state, is designed to prepare us for the enjoyment of that state. "The statutes of the Lord are right, rejoicing the heart; the commandment of the Lord is pure, enlightening the eyes." Psalm xix, 8.

Did you ever notice, my friends, how frequently this word *do* occurs in the Scriptures? and how much is suspended upon it? Let us notice a few passages in which this word *do* occurs. "Not every one that sayeth unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven, but he that *doeth* the will of my Father who is in heaven." Matt. viii, 21. "Whosoever shall *do* the will of my Father who is in heaven, the same is my mother, my sister, and my brother." Matt. xii, 50. "If you *keep* my commandments you shall abide in my love, even as I have kept my Father's commandments, and abide in his love." John xv, 10. "If ye *do* these things, you shall never fall, for so an entrance shall be ministered to you abundantly into the everlasting kingdom of our Lord and Saviour, Jesus Christ." 2 Pet. i, 10. "He that will love life and see good days, let him refrain his tongue from evil, and his lips that they speak no guile; let him eschew evil and *do* good." 1 Pet. iii, 10, 11. Thus, by refraining from evil and doing good, we have the assurance of good days and a happy life.

The same principle is set forth and enforced in many of our Lord's parables. What was it that caused the lord of the unjust steward to turn him out of the stewardship? Was it not because he had not done his lord's will? His lord had appointed him a work to do, and failing to do that work faithfully, he lost the stewardship, and was turned off in disgrace. Thus will God deal with the children of men. He has given commands to all; and only

the willing and obedient shall eat the good of the land. See also the parable of the three servants and the talents. The lord of these servants delivered to them his goods, saying: "*Occupy till I come;*" and then departed for a season. When he returned and reckoned with these servants, he said to two of them: "Well done, good and faithful servants; you have been faithful over a few things; I will make you rulers over many things; enter into the joys of your lord." That is, you have done the commands, enter into the celestial city. But of the third it was said: "Take the unprofitable servant, bind him hand and foot, and cast him into outward darkness." Why this awful sentence against him? Simply because he had not *done* the lord's will.

It is not necessary for a person to commit many presumptuous sins, or to run the whole round of dissipation and vice in order to forfeit heaven, and sink to eternal woe. If he desires never to enter the eternal city of God, he has but to fold his arms in inglorious ease, and refrain from active obedience to the commands of Christ. It is not said that the unprofitable servant had done much wickedness; that he had blasphemed the name of his lord; that he had been guilty of lying, murder, and theft; indeed, no active wickedness is charged against him. The charge against him, and for which he was shut out from the joys of his lord, was, that he had done no good; he did not do the commandment of his lord, and for this omission of duty he was cast off into outward darkness; yes, outward darkness, darkness beyond the reach of light, where no straggling ray of light would ever penetrate the dark abode.

Did you, my friends, ever notice carefully the account of the final judgment recorded in the twenty-fifth chapter of Matthew? The destiny of the whole world is poised on the single point of doing or not doing. While pronounc-

ing the awful sentence upon the ungodly, the judge does not recount a long list of dark evils that had been perpetrated by them; there is no reference made to any unrighteous act which they had committed. They are sentenced to "everlasting punishment," because they had not done good; had not done the commandments of God. "Inasmuch as you did it, not to one of the least of these my brethren, you did it not to me." There is the ground of their condemnation. That numbers who shall stand in that condemned host, will have been guilty of crimes of the darkest die, is certain; for "without are dogs and sorcerers, and whoremongers and murderers, and idolaters, and whosoever loveth and maketh a lie." But the Saviour does not refer to these in pronouncing the final sentence, simply to let the world know—to let all men know, that in order to enter the heavenly state, man must do the commandments, must not only refrain from evil, but learn to do good. But am I asked, which of the commands must be kept in order to enter into the celestial city? I answer, God hath made no difference. He has not divided his commandments into essential and non-essential mandates; he has given no commands for mere pastime for the amusement of man, which he may either obey or not obey according to his own caprice, or views of propriety. Every command of God is essential in its place, and for the accomplishment of the Lord's purposes. One of the most dangerous and fatal inventions of the wicked one, is the suggestion that some of God's commands are unessential. It virtually sets aside the entire authority of Christ, and leaves man to his own judgment as to his duty. One man esteems one command unessential, and another neglects another on the same principle, until the whole law of God is rendered void. When a man obeys one command because he judges it to be right and proper; and refuses or neglects to obey another, because he thinks it

unessential; he is simply acting in every case upon his own judgment, and not upon the authority of God. Should he decide that the command which he has judged to be essential was unessential, he would neglect it also.

The danger of this strategy of the Devil is fully illustrated in the history of Saul, king of Israel. The Lord commanded Saul, saying: "Now go and smite Amalek, and utterly destroy all that they have, and spare them not; but slay both man and woman, and infant and suckling, ox and sheep, camel and ass."

At this command, "Saul gathered the people together, and numbered them in Telaim, two hundred thousand footmen, and ten thousand men of Judah; with this host of valiant soldiers, he was fully able to obey the whole command of God. But he "spared Agag the king, and the best of the sheep, and of the oxen, and of the fatlings, and the lambs, and all that was good; and would not utterly destroy them; but every thing that was vile and refuse, that they destroyed utterly."

In this case Saul acted upon the principle that some of God's commands are essential, while others are not; in other words, he made his own judgment the rule of his action. But what was the result? Did God accept his obedience as far as it went, and overlook the balance? Did he admit the correctness of Saul's judgment in the matter, and acknowledge that that portion of the command which had been disobeyed, was not very essential, and that therefore, it was all right? No, my friends; God looked upon the whole course of Saul, as rebellion against his authority. When Samuel, the prophet of God, approached Saul, the king said to him: "Blessed be thou of the Lord: I have performed the commandment of the Lord. And Samuel said: What meaneth then this blating of the sheep in mine ears, and the lowing of oxen which I hear?" Yes, indeed, what does all this mean? The dumb beasts

testified to the disobedience of the king. Still, he contended that he had obeyed the command of God. He said, "Yea, I have obeyed the voice of the Lord, and have gone the way which the Lord sent me, and have brought Agag, the king of Amelek, and have utterly destroyed the Amalekites. But the people took of the spoil, sheep and oxen, the chief things which should have been utterly destroyed, to sacrifice unto the Lord thy God in Gilgal."

Thus he attempts to throw the blame on the people. But this would not do. He had authority over the people; hence the whole sin is charged upon him. "And Samuel said: Hath God as great delight in burnt offerings and sacrifices, as in obeying the voice of the Lord? Behold, to obey is better than sacrifices, and to hearken, than the fat of rams. For rebellion is as the sin of witchcraft, and stubbornness is as iniquity and idolatry. Because thou hast rejected the word of the Lord, he hath also rejected thee from being king."

Thus, tampering with the commands of God, making some essential and some unessential, and only obeying as far as we may think expedient, or necessary, is regarded by the Lord himself, as rejecting the word of God; it is condemned as rebellion and stubbornness, and as the sin of witchcraft and idolatry. The same principle stands firm to the present day, for principles never change. The man who sets aside, or neglects any command in the New Testament, because he don't think it essential, or because he can not see the necessity or propriety of it, acts on the same principle that Saul did, and is therefore, in danger of meeting a much sorer punishment; "For if they escaped not who refused him that spake on earth, much more shall not we escape, if we turn away from him that speaketh from heaven."

Inasmuch then, as it is necessary to do the commands of God, in order to enter heaven, and seeing that all that

God hath commanded is essential, I can not to-day mention all the commands which are binding under the gospel dispensation. A few, each of which may be regarded as the head of a class, must suffice. Commencing with the sinner who has never made his peace with God; we notice,

1. The command to hearken to the voice of God. "He that hath ears to hear, let him hear," is the broad command of God to every intelligent creature on earth. Then, in order to obtain a title to the tree of life, we must hear what God has spoken. "See that ye refuse not him that speaketh," is a divine injunction.

2. Having heard, the sinner is commanded to believe, to receive the divine testimony as true, and thus to believe on the Lord Jesus Christ with all the heart; yes, believe on him in all his divine and official character, as the Son of the true and living God, and as the only name given under heaven among men whereby we must be saved.

3. We mention as a third command, repentance, which implies sorrow for sin, confession of sin, and a turning away from sin. When Paul stood in the midst of Mar's Hill, in the presence of the Athenian Arcopagus, he said: "The times of this ignorance God winked at, but now he commandeth all men everywhere to repent." This is imperative, and must be obeyed in order to enter the celestial city.

4. Now, this penitent believer, who has resolved to give himself up to the service of God, is commanded to be immersed in the name of the Lord Jesus. "Go," said the Lord to his apostles, "Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature; he that believeth and is immersed shall be saved; he that believeth not shall be condemned." Mark xvi, 16, 17. In perfect conformity to this commission, on the memorable Pentecost, when the great multitude were pierced in their hearts, and said: "Men and brethren, what shall we do?" Peter said unto

them: "Repent and be immersed every one of you, in the name of Jesus Christ, for the remission of sins." Acts ii, 38. "So the believing Cornelius was commanded to be immersed in the name of the Lord." Acts x, 48.

These commandments being obeyed from the heart, brings the person thus obeying into a new relation to God, angels and men; hence the apostle says: "As many as have been immersed into Christ, have put on Christ." In view of this fact, he further says: "There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither bond nor free; there is neither male nor female; for ye are all one in Christ Jesus."

But all this does not exhaust the commandments of God; there are further duties to be performed. Out of the new relation into which obedience to these commands brings the believer, arise new duties and responsibilities. These must be met, and faithfully performed in order to a final admission into the city of our God. Hence the apostle says to all who have thus far obeyed the gospel: "Besides this, giving all diligence, add to your faith, virtue; and to virtue, knowledge; and to knowledge, temperance; and to temperance, patience; and to patience, godliness; and to godliness, brotherly kindness; and to brotherly kindness, charity." 2 Peter i, 5-7.

Each of these items embraces a whole class of duties. The word rendered virtue, is *aretee*, which means, "goodness, good quality of any kind, excellence, virtue, uprightness." The word virtue, as we have it in the common version, signifies moral goodness of every kind. Temperance is a virtue; so is piety or godliness. These are all virtues. Knowledge also implies much. The word rendered godliness, is *eusebeia*, which means piety, devotion, or the disposition to worship God. Brotherly kindness has reference to our treatment of the brethren under all circumstances. Hence it is very extensive in its application to the christian life. "To do good, and to com-

municate, forget not," said the great apostle to the Gentiles. Jesus said: "If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross and follow me." Matt. xvi, 24.

To follow Jesus is to imitate him to walk in his steps. As he is in heaven, they who follow in his steps, will surely enter there at last. The man that follows Jesus will do the commandments of God, for he always did the things that pleased his Father. In conclusion on this point, I will quote one more scripture: "The grace of God that bringeth salvation, hath appeared to all men; teaching us that denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly in this present world, looking for that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God, and our Saviour Jesus Christ, who gave himself for us, that he might purify unto himself a peculiar people zealous of good works." Titus ii, 11–14.

Now consider how comprehensive these commands are. *Soberly*, signifies self-control; the government of our own passions and appetites. *Righteously;* this has reference to our dealings with men, in all the relations of life; it requires that in all things we should deal justly, and love and practice mercy. *Godly;* this has reference to our duty to God; it implies reverence for his name and authority, while we worship him in spirit and in truth. Now, when that celestial messenger who showed these things to the beloved John, said: "Blessed are they that do his commandments," doubtless he had this whole system of commandments in view, all of which we must do in order to secure a right to the tree of life, which grows on either side of the river of water of life in the golden city.

Is any one ready to exclaim: "Lord, who then can be saved." To such the Lord would say: "Fear not little flock, it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom." "My grace shall be sufficient for you." And

Paul says: "Having a high-priest over the house of God, let us draw near with a true heart, in full assurance of faith, having our hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience, and our bodies washed with pure water." Heb. x, 21, 22. Yes, we have a mercy-seat, to which we may come daily, and obtain forgiveness for our errors, and strength for our duties.

Now, with these, and all similar commands before us, and the voice of the angel, speaking in the name of God, assuring us that these commands must be obeyed by us in order to our entrance into the glorious city of our God, what shall we say of our departed sister, in whose memory we now speak? What ground of hope have we in reference to her future state?

I am not in the habit of saying much on the virtues or vices of those whose funerals I preach. But, on this occasion, I can speak with confidence, and it is a pleasure to me to do so. We have already noticed the early consecration of our departed sister to the service of God. She did obey the first class of commandments to which I have adverted. In early youth, she lent a listening ear to the voice of God. Having ears to hear, she did hear the commandments of the Lord, and, like the Corinthians of old, hearing, she believed, and believing she repented and was immersed, according to the gospel of Jesus the Christ. Thus she came into that new relation; she was immersed into Christ, and became a member of his mystical body. 'Tis true, when she learned the way of the Lord more perfectly, fearing her former baptism was no better than John's baptism would have been after the kingdom had come, she was immersed by Elder Michael Combs, in the name of the Lord Jesus. This only proves her sincere desire to do the whole will of God, with an enlightened judgment and understanding heart.

She was a woman of great energy of character, frank

and out-spoken. She was noted for her benevolence and kindness to the poor and needy around her. She had an abundance of that charity that "thinketh no evil," and was always generous, and ready to forgive a fault. She was deeply pious, and co-operated with her husband heartily in training up their numerous family, eleven in number, in the right ways of the Lord. The Bible was her constant companion, and I presume it may be said to every one of her children, "From a child thou hast known the Holy Scriptures."

As evidence of this fact, and showing also the good effects of such training, every one of her children became members of the Christian Church in early life, and three of her sons are now, and long have been, able and efficient preachers of the gospel of the blessed God. How fully are the words of the wise man exemplified in this example: "Train up the child in the way he should go, and when he is old he will not depart from it."

"While she was noted for her extensive and correct knowledge of the Bible, she did not neglect other good books. She was well posted in all governmental affairs, and had a clear perception of the right and wrong, in the administration of civil affairs. She was a true patriot, and took a deep interest in the struggle now going on between the government and this wicked rebellion. She had one son, one son-in-law, and some eight grand-sons in the Union army, and other relatives in whose patriotism she gloried.

"She filled all the relations of life with dignity and honor; as a wife, mother, and friend, she was kind, affectionate, and true; and her Christian character was as bright as her faith was steadfast and sublime. She loved the house of the Lord, and was always punctual in her attendance upon the worship of God while her health would permit. She loved the pure word of God, and often while

listening to a powerful discourse, in which the love of God to man was the topic, it was not uncommon to hear her break forth in an ecstacy of joy, and praise the Lord, and exhort those around her."

She was not afraid to die; she longed to depart and be with Christ. Just before she closed her eyes in death, she desired those around to sing to her of heaven just as she was putting off her earthly tabernacle. Thus she passed away in the triumphs of faith, in full hope of immortality. Having spent a long life in doing the commandments of God, she had a right—yes, a constitutional right to the tree of life, which right also gives the privilege of entering in through the gates into the city of our God.

Then, children, dry up your tears; your mother has made a safe entrance into the paradise of God. Could she speak to you from that far-off land, she would say: Weep not for me, I now rest from all my labors, and am comforted; and should she speak again, she would say: Children, come home. Do the commandments, that you may also enjoy the honors that cluster around the throne of God. Then, let us all lay the heavenly admonition to heart, and make it our life-business to do the commandments, that we, too, may have right to the tree of life, and may finally enter into that heavenly state, of which the city which John saw, is but the symbol. Sinners, come to Christ, and commence to obey the commandments.

SERMON IV.

DECISION OF CHARACTER.

BY A. R. BENTON.

A double minded man is unstable in all his ways.—Jas. 1, 8.

This remark of the Apostle has been selected for the purpose of setting forth the *Nature* and *Advantages* of Decision of Character.

Human life has often been compared to a voyage. Like a proud ship with all its sails set, or propelled by the mightier power of steam, freighted with the most costly merchandise, and the more valuable burden of human lives, admirable in all her appointments for a safe and prosperous voyage, so are we permitted to look on a human soul, just launched on the great ocean of life, about to make the voyage to an eternal world.

But, if while contemplating that ocean-bound vessel, as it passes from its moorings, heading away for the port of its destination, we should discover that the helm was wanting, that by some oversight, the means for controlling the motion of the ship had been neglected, with good reason would we fear for the safety of the vessel and all on board. In fancy, we follow it, as it rolls unmanageably at the mercy of the waves, thrown from its course into inter-tropical regions, or dashed against icebergs in northern seas, and at last swallowed up in the abyss, with nothing to mark the spot of the catastrophe.

This is a brief and imperfect representation of that young man, who essays to make the voyage of life without the controlling principle, Decision of Character. The

chart by which his course is to be taken, and the outfit for the passage may be perfect and complete, but without this Decision, all these will not avail, except by chance, to bring him to his desired haven. According to the figure employed by the Apostle in this very connection, he is like a wave of the sea, driven of winds and tossed. A wild fluctuation, an instability upon which nothing useful can be predicated, and an activity that is barren of useful results, characterize the man devoid of decision. This oscillation of mind without progress, is not merely useless, but is positively pernicious.

To be unable to make up a decision on a matter in science, in philosophy or in morals, is virtually to have no mind at all, and for all practical purposes, instinct would be a more reliable guide. But just so far as the mind is trained to give its decisions with promptness, force, and correctness, in that same degree it becomes useful as a guide, and a source of happiness to its possessor.

It would be an easy task to show the essential relation of this *decisive* spirit to success in the secular affairs of life; and is it to be supposed that its relation to our higher life—the life of principle — the life of the soul, is less important? To this higher exercitation we may perhaps be less disposed, but how, I ask, is it less our deep concern? If the interests of our immortal natures comprehend and subordinate all other interests, and contain them, as the greater contains the less, then the attainment of every lower good will be best secured by aiming at the higher good, and, figuratively, to hit the earth it is best to aim at heaven. If then it may be assumed, that Decision of Character is vitally important in the secular employments of life, much more will it be valuable in our moral relations; or, in other words, Moral Decision gives tone, and imparts firmness and strength to character.

To recommend the cultivation of this decisive disposition

of mind, on the grounds of Christian principle, is the object we propose in this discourse.

1. And first, in respect to the nature of this moral decision, I observe, that in a very important particular, it is different from mere firmness of character.

In the original constitutions of men, both moral and physical, a great diversity is found to exist. One is bold and forward, another timid and reserved; one is frank and confiding, another is prone to concealment and distrust; one is wavering and undecided, another is firm and decisive. Now this latter quality of firmness differs from moral decision, since it may never act in harmony with the dictates of conscience, or be controlled by sentiments of duty.

This native heroism of the soul, as it may be termed, is as thoroughly compatible with injustice, cruelty, and oppression, as with any of the nobler attributes of the mind, and when linked to a revengeful and malicious spirit, it blossoms out into the most showy crimes, and ripens the most pestiferous fruit.

But in contrast with this mere, undiscriminating firmness, moral decision first takes counsel of conscience, and inquires into the law of duty, and then resolves in view of what is right or wrong in the case.

Without this *moral* element, firmness is obstinacy, a quality possessed by some brutes, but beneath the dignity of a rational being. Obstinacy is an instinct, moral decision is principle; the former is a degradation, the latter the means of elevation.

2. In the next place, as an element of this decision of character of which we speak, I would mention *clear conviction.*

No one should infer from this statement that the attainment to clear convictions of duty, will necessarily insure decision of character, but no man can be practically de-

cisive, without a strong conviction that he is in the path of duty. So long as that path is uncertain, timidity and irresolution will mark his hesitating footsteps. Like a benighted wanderer in the woods, uncertain whether his way lies to the right or to the left, fearing to go forward lest he go further astray or fall into danger, he first hesitates, then doubts, and finally despairs. So the man with no clear convictions of duty palters with the most important concerns, and his efforts die away in languid and inefficient endeavors.

To the man who is conscious of acting without any clear convictions, and perhaps on this very account disheartened by the reflection that he may be acting contrary to the will of God, how paralyzing the thought. This is a moral torpedo that benumbs all his executive faculties, and forever consigns him to the shelf of uselessness.

I do not pretend, that it is easy to arrive at assured convictions of truth and duty on all subjects, but be admonished of the impossibility of being prepared for resolute and persevering action, unless sustained by this firm conviction of which we speak.

But it must be obvious to all, if we are designed in our creation to act a part, and to act it well, then the principles which should govern us must be level with our apprehension, and hence the path of duty must be plain to every honest mind, and a clear conviction with respect to that path by no means an unattainable good. As the nervous *aura* courses along the muscles, and thus gives them tension and force, so clear conviction energizes all our decisions respecting duty; and imparts to them constancy and power. This is the germ from which the resolute and heroic virtues are produced.

3. The last element of moral decision, we mentioned, is Reliance on our Convictions.

The very first conception as it seems to me, which we

form of decision is, that we rely on our own perceptions, reason, or intuitions. These were manifestly designed to lead us to the cognizance of truth and duty; and the intensity of our moral decisions will have a fixed ratio to the reliance we bestow upon them. Hence, I am not surprised to hear the Saviour declare, that if need be, a man must hate even father or mother, in order to be his disciple. Upon his own convictions, he must rely and act, though the tenderest ties be severed, and a man be ostracised from the amenities of domestic life. Reliance on the views, wishes, or practices of another fellow mortal, is contrary both to sound philosophy and true religion. The order of nature has been so disposed, that in making up our decisions respecting duty, we must rely at last upon our own perceptions, reason and intuitions. These original faculties of our nature are regarded as trustworthy and sufficient guides in tracing the attributes of Deity, and the credibility of the revelation which he has given to us. And if these are a court of ultimate appeal when we inquire into the loftiest subjects ever presented for the consideration of the human mind, surely, we may rely on them with unqualified security, when the questions pertaining to human duty are brought up for decision.

This leads me to remark, that the want of reliance on our convictions, and conformity to the moral standard of others, will most effectually scatter the forces of a man. No matter how clear a man's convictions may be, if he is not willing to trust them and follow them, he has withdrawn so much force from his own proper life. This is that element of strength in all those master minds that have left an eternal imprint of themselves on the ages. Such are reliant on their own convictions of truth; and like the Apostle Paul, when a great truth was brought home to his conscience, they confer not with flesh and blood. Henceforward, what they must *do* is their con-

cern, not what people will think. To them a platform of principles is something to stand upon, and not a convenient something from which to step off.

It would be an easy thing comparatively, to live in the world if we might always follow the opinions and practices which are in fashion; but if we set up our own usurping views, the way of life will become hard and vexatious, since there will always be those who think they know what our duty is better than we ourselves know it.

If at any time, therefore, my young friends, you are tempted to throw away that reliance which rightfully belongs to your convictions, in the hope of securing some ephemeral and sordid advantage, be encouraged by the noble words of the great astronomer Kepler, who, true to himself and the cause of science, thus wrote to his friend: "I keep up my spirits (at this time he was in great want) with the thought that I serve not the Emperor alone, but the whole human race—that I am laboring not for the present generation, but for all posterity. If God stand by me and look to the victuals, I hope to perform something yet." Truly, this is the eternal type of that consolation which a relying consciousness of truth brings with it.

Having thus briefly described the *nature* of Decision, we now proceed to the consideration of the *advantages* which it insures.

1. A decided course is a *safe* course.

I apprehend that much of the moral indecision in the world, results from the lurking suspicion that somehow it is not quite *safe* to take a decided stand in favor of the right. No doubt, men would generally prefer to be right, rather than to be wrong, but yet they would like to be insured in case the right should fail. Though they would assent to the maxim that honesty is the best policy, yet it is not believed to be an insurance policy which will ad-

just all losses. Now, if we could be thoroughly assured, that it is altogether safe to be decided with respect to moral truth, and moral action, much indecision would be banished from the world.

It stands to reason that a course of moral decision must be a safe course, whether we regard this world or that to come. Is it not an obvious law of our being, that we shall be decidedly in favor of truth and right, and opposed to falsehood and wrong? And is it reasonable to suppose that God would make it our duty to obey this law of our nature, and then reward us for disobeying it? If the Divine Lawgiver thus enacts and rewards infractions of his laws, he is arrayed against himself, a thought so repugnant to the moral sense of every thinking being, that it can not be entertained for a moment.

But it is true—it must be so—that God's providential government is exercised in favor of right, and against wrong, and discriminates in favor of those who are decided in virtue, and against the vicious and depraved.

In the vegetable world, the sweetest flowers spring from innoxious plants, but flowers without fragrance and sweetness betray the plants that are pernicious. Such harmony and congruity belong to the fundamental laws of the vegetable world. Nor is the harmony of things less striking in the moral universe of God.

It can not be safe to poison the fountains of truth, and then attempt to slake our thirst therefrom, nor to adulterate the bread of life, and then seek to appease our hungering after righteousness.

In the very nature of the case, therefore, there is safety in a decisive course of moral action, since in this way a man drops into the current of God's providences, and is borne easily and safely by them, unimperiled by the eddies and counter-currents of a hesitating, and undecided course.

But the voice of History and Experience fully confirms the truth which is thus antecedently probable. Would it not have been *safe* for the mother of our race, to give a decided dissent when an act of disloyalty to the command of God was first proposed?

Humanly speaking, what woes would have been averted, had there been the power on her part to utter the decisive No!! What a long and self-perpetuating train of ills has one act of indecision drawn after it! Contemplate all the unchronicled ills of the past, and the unrevealed miseries of the future resulting from this source, and then say, if it is not safe to be decided in favor of right and duty.

When led by his affection, Peter followed his master into the hall of the High Priest, thinking no doubt, that the Saviour would deliver himself in some way from his foes, as he was wont to do—and while he mixes in the crowd, hoping to escape observation, either his speech or perturbation betrays him, and a little damsel remarks, this is one of his disciples.

What penitential tears, what deep and poignant grief, what bitterness of soul, he would have escaped, had not his Christian decision of character deserted him! Under a load of almost insupportable shame and anguish, he went out and wept bitterly, when the enormity of his guilt flashed upon his soul from the mildly reproachful look of his Saviour.

It would have been perfectly *safe* to confess discipleship to the Lord, though he had accompanied the Master to crucifixion; but it was unspeakably hazardous to deny his name. This decision of character, which is so important in the highest concerns of life, and which is always safe, is equally safe in respect to all the minor interests of this state of being. These high moral interests subordinate

and control all others, and what is safe here is safe everywhere.

2. Again, a decided course is the most *useful* course.

Were I to ask, why of two men with equal natural abilities, this one is more influential and useful in life than the other? in most cases the answer would be, the one has a decided character, and the other has not.

To be useful as a man in this commercial and enterprising age, one must possess this quality; and when on this stock you engraft integrity and Christianity, you have the fruitful boughs on which will cluster all the ripened virtues.

Moreover, to the student especially, is it useful to cherish this decided state of mind. No real progress can be made when effort is chilled by indifference and indecision. A feeble assent to demonstrated truth, a vague idea of some lurking truth in philosophy, or a nebulous, misty notion of the beauties of literature, is of no avail in the discipline or information of the mind.

There are persons who claim to be students that lack ligament. There is nothing to tie together their faculties which are lying loosely around. They are like some kinds of cloth, so loose in texture that no amount of workmanship can make them into garments of any account.

Such learners would willingly—that is, they would not object to have some learning galvanized upon the surface in some easy way. But if the solid metal of knowledge must be obtained, as the real gold is toilsomely gathered by the miner, they turn away from such decided efforts with undisguised aversion. It is no easy matter "to gird up the loins of the mind" so as to think intensely and decisively on a given subject.

Absorption, too, is a method of acquiring knowledge that is greatly praised by loose and spongy minds. If knowledge could be imbibed as automatically as the sponge

draws in water, then nothing would be more easy or delightful than the process of education. But I greatly fear that all these methods are impracticable, however desirable they seem to be.

Let me, then, commend to your earnest consideration the importance of decision of character in making attainments in knowledge. If you do not have a decided tendency of mind by nature, let it become yours by habit. Resolve to do nothing, except with decision. This is the fundamental principle of energy. With it you may fail, but without it you can not succeed.

But on another arena decision of character exerts a wider and nobler influence. I mean by this, that the deeds which have been followed by the most useful and permanent results have been achieved by moral decision.

The communication of moral and religious truth, and its exemplification in life, is the most important work ever committed to men. For this purpose was the mission of the Son of God, and for this end the apostles and early martyrs labored. With them, all considerations of temporal policy and expediency, all temporizings and compromisings were made to bow before the commanding majesty of duty. What moral decision was that which could hurl *twelve* men, strong only in truth and the resolution it imparts, against the opposing hosts of the world in arms against them.

Trace the results of their heroic labors through the years of time and the cycles of eternity, and be instructed in the permanent and useful effects of Christian decision.

The multitude of examples that occur in illustration of this truth is so great as to distract choice, embracing the proud array of names enrolled on the lists of philanthropists, reformers, moral teachers, and inspired apostles of truth. But selecting one from the many, let us contem-

plate for a moment the moral decision of Moses, with its attendant train of blessings.

Reared in all the luxuriousness of a sensual and effeminate court, prospective heir to all the treasures of Egypt, soon to grasp a powerful scepter belonging to the most renowned monarchy of ancient times, as the prospect of life is expanding before his view, he is called to make a most important decision—one in which the interests of millions are directly at stake, and indirectly the interests of the whole world.

The question is simply this: will he take part with the wronged and oppressed, be their leader and benefactor, or will he cleave to these glittering and attractive splendors of royalty? Benevolence is on the one side, selfishness on the other; here poverty, hardship, and persecution, there wealth, ease, and immunity from wrong.

Despite all these advantages held out to him as the son of Pharaoh's daughter, he strangely "chooses to suffer affliction." Nothing but a genuine decision of character could have prompted him to adopt a course almost without a parallel. The wisdom of that decision, how loudly is it vindicated by the immense benefits that have inured to the whole human race.

Now, what is true with respect to the consequences of his moral decisions has been true, in some degree, in thousands of other cases. This principle, by whomsoever exhibited, always gravitates to the same general result of usefulness.

There can be no excuse for any man who turns away from rectitude for the sake of outward prosperity. If he sells his principles for secular prosperity, he will find in the end that its promises were all spurious. In public affairs, in commercial affairs, in social affairs, the course which carries with it the highest moral element is the safest, best, and most prosperous course.

3. In the third place a decided course is an *easy* course. Here we would not be understood as affirming that a man, in consequence of his moral decision, will not at times be subject to severe trials, or on the other hand, that by a timid and temporizing course, he may not sometimes avoid trials, but this—a man's decision of character will, on the whole, cause him less embarrassment than any other course in discharging the duties of life.

Decision is a piece of defensive armor by which temptation is most successfully warded off. Like the shield of Achilles it is of heavenly beauty and divine temper. When assailed by temptations to sinful indulgence, no protection is so reliable as the defensive one of decision. To barter this away for irresolution or hesitating indetermination is, like Esau, to sell a birthright for a mess of pottage.

Let a man, especially a young man, when the temptations of the world are spread out before him, show himself determined and able to resist them; let him, when solicited to the haunts of sin by wicked associates, exhibit a firmness of denial that no sneers or flatteries can shake, and let this be repeated, if necessary, a few times, and soon there will be occasion to repeat it no more; for at length, convinced that their efforts will be unavailing, his tempters will retire from the fruitless contest.

But on the other hand, let a man, when plied with incentives to wrong-doing, only show himself half-inclined to yield; let him look with indulgence and no disfavor on courses of moral obliquity, and let him yield occasionally to the fascinations of questionable pleasures, that man is painfully and continually embarrassed, if not essentially lost.

Every yielding to the importunities of the unprincipled will encourage them to renew their demands, and it will not be strange if their attempts are continued until the

victim is led step by step practically to apostatize from acknowledged duty, and eventually to place himself beyond all affinity for moral good.

It will be hard, without embarrassment and inconsistency, to conform to the low and variable standard of mere worldly maxims and practices; but comparatively easy to conform to the everlasting laws of Christian manner, piety, and purity, that can not be changed by any fluctuation of opinion.

Thus we have attempted briefly to indicate the *nature* of decision; that it is mainly composed of clear convictions, and reliance on our convictions, and we have endeavored to recommend a decisive course of moral life as the only *safe*, *useful*, and *easy* course.

In conclusion, it seems almost unnecessary to add that this is also the course of happiness.

"Our being's end and aim, that something still which prompts the eternal sigh," that ideal and intangible good, which we call happiness, can only be found in this direction. This must be so, because all experience and observation declare that a man is not to be judged happy by what befalls him in the outward circumstances of life, but by the spirit with which he bears the allotments of life. Milton has truly observed that—

> "The mind is its own place, and in itself
> Can make a heaven of hell, a hell of heaven."

Before, then, we can pronounce a man happy, we must know how he lives within, who are his thought companions, and what is his spiritual fare.

We are inclined to think the man happy who has a great deal, while at the same time, like Lucifer, he may be wasting away by strange combustion in the penal fires of a self-kindled gehenna.

Life will be like the material of which it is builded. If

built of silver and gold, it will be a hard, metallic life; if out of pleasure, an unsatisfied life; if out of passion and appetite, a boisterous and sensual life; but if of righteousness and truth, a happy and eternal life. A man's happiness consists not in the abundance of the things he possesses, but in his rich affections, his moral tastes, and in his comprehensive grasp of God's truth as impressed on all his works. To have a decided predilection for all these moral conditions is to have a hold upon the sources of human happiness, and without it a man is a starveling and a pauper in the midst of the greatest profusion and abundance.

Ye seekers after happiness, know ye that life—true life—is not made up of externals, but of the states of the soul, and in walking across this narrow bridge of time, if your look is bent downward upon this world you shall grow dizzy and fall; but if your eye is steadily and decidedly fixed on the shore of the eternal world, you shall walk straighter here, and be more sure of reaching the other side in safety.

SERMON V.

REST FOR THE WEARY SOUL.

BY R. MILLIGAN.

"Come unto me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart; and ye shall find rest to your souls. For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light."—MATT. XI, 28–30.

THESE are the precious words of Jesus, who came to save his people from their sins. They were at first addressed to the Jews; but since that time the middle wall of partition between the Jews and the Gentiles has been taken away; all such distinctions of caste have been abolished, and this language is, therefore, now just as applicable to the uncircumcision as it is to the circumcision; it is just as applicable to the readers of this discourse as it was to the multitudes that were following Jesus on the occasion to which the inspired historian here refers. All who really labor and are heavy laden, are here most cordially invited to come to the Saviour.

In considering this subject, it seems natural that we should first inquire into the meaning and import of the rich boon that is here offered—*rest to the soul.* What does it mean?

If our blessed Redeemer had said, "ye shall find rest to your bodies," then no doubt all would have understood him; then, indeed, his meaning would have been plain and obvious even to the most thoughtless and inconsiderate. But the rest of the soul is very different from that which is merely physical or animal. A man may enjoy the most

perfect physical rest; he may perform no physical labor whatever, and he may be entirely free from all physical suffering, and yet it is not unfrequently the case that a strange, mysterious and oppressive burden or influence will rest, like a nightmare on his soul. He may not be able to explain what it is, or whence it is, or how it operates; but nevertheless it is a fixed abiding reality which no mere speculation can ever remove. The materialist, who has reasoned himself into the belief that he has no soul; that he differs from the brutes that perish only in the superior texture and organization of his physical constitution, feels this burden as oppressively, and sighs under its influence as deeply, as constantly, and as mournfully as does the visionary who has run into the opposite extreme; who fancies that he is all spirit, and that physical existence is a mere phantom of the imagination.

But let this burden be removed from the soul, let the soul enjoy rest, and then indeed all is well; then no change in our physical condition or circumstances can have very much influence on our happiness and higher spiritual enjoyments. The furnace may be heated seven times more than it is wont to be heated for the punishment of criminals, but Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego will rejoice in the midst of the flames. Intriguing politicians may lay traps and snares for the innocent, but Daniel will sleep in the den of lions as sweetly as if he reposed on a bed of roses. An infuriated mob may insult and scourge the servants of the Most High, but at midnight Paul and Silas will sing praises unto God. And all this they will do simply because they have found rest to their souls.

It is therefore evident, I think, that this is one of the most comprehensive promises in the whole Bible. Our blessed Saviour here presents to us, in a single word, the *effect* or final result of all the means and instrumentalities that God has ordained for the redemption and salvation of

our poor fallen world. Of these, that which is chief and proximate is, of course, union with God himself. This alone can calm the troubled breast. 'T is manna to the hungry soul, and to the weary, rest. But this, of course, implies both purity of heart and holiness of life. Our sins must all be taken away, and we must be justified and sanctified in the name of the Lord Jesus and by the Spirit of our God, before our souls can have union, communion, and fellowship with him, and find rest and peace in the bosom of his love. And hence it seems that every good and perfect gift that the heart of man can desire is really summed up in this most precious and most comprehensive promise of our adorable Redeemer.

But observe, that this most precious boon of heaven is offered only to the weary and heavy laden; to those who really feel that sin is a burden to their souls. And even to these it is not offered absolutely, but only conditionally. Those who would enjoy it must first come to Christ; they must take his yoke on them, and they must also continue to learn of him.

But how, it may be asked, can the sinner come to Christ? It is evident that we can no longer approach his person, as did the multitudes who once followed him through the vales and mountains of Palestine. And even if we could, it would avail us but little to do so; for thousands of those who thus came to him during his personal ministry on earth, never tasted of the rich blessings that are here promised.

My readers will here doubtless remember the very instructive narrative that is recorded in the sixth chapter of the testimony of John. It throws much light on this subject. Jesus, it seems, had a short time previous to the occasion therein mentioned fed five thousand men, besides many women and children, on five barley loaves and two little fishes, in a desert place near the city of Bethsaida,

in the province of Gaulonitis. And having recrossed the Sea of Galilee, and come to Capernaum, a great multitude *came* to him. But their coming was not such as he here invites and encourages. They came, not because they wished to seek and obtain rest for their souls; but because they had eaten of the loaves and were filled. And hence in the language of rebuke and disapprobation, Jesus said to them: "No man *can come* to me, unless the Father who has sent me draw him." But in order to explain the manner in which the Father draws sinners, and as if to anticipate the many unprofitable controversies that have taken place on this subject, he immediately adds in the very next verse, "It is written in the prophets, They shall all be taught of God. Every man, therefore," says he, "who *hath heard and hath learned of the Father* cometh to me."*

It seems, then, that all persons who would come to Christ, must do so through the teachings and the instructions of the Father. And this is just what every reasonable man is led to suppose. For how can any one come to a Saviour in whom he does not believe? And how can he believe in a Saviour of whom he has never heard? But the greatest sage on earth can know nothing of Jesus Christ, and of him crucified, until he is instructed by the Father. For, says Christ, "No man knoweth the Son but the Father."† Even John the Baptist, the harbinger and near kinsman of Jesus, did not know him *as the Messiah*, until, in his baptism, he was pointed out to him as such by the Father. It was not till after that John had seen the Holy Spirit descend from heaven, like a dove, and abide on Jesus as he rose from the liquid grave between the banks of the Jordan, that he was able to introduce him to the people as the Anointed of God. But He that sent John to baptize in water had given him this sign by which

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* John vi, 44, 45, † Matt. xi, 27.

he might recognize Him of whom all the prophets had spoken.* And from the moment that he saw and recognized it, he began to say unto the people, "Behold the Lamb of God, that taketh away the sin of the world."†

God, then, draws all men to Jesus by the chords of love, through faith produced in their hearts by the words of his grace and the influences of his Holy Spirit. And hence it was that the very first thing the apostles did, in fulfilling their commission wherever they went, was to preach Jesus Christ, and him crucified. This was the burden of all their discourses. The prophets had said the people shall all be taught of God;‡ and the apostles were, therefore, sent out to fulfill this glorious prediction, so full of mercy and so full of grace. All, then, who have ever heard and properly learned what the apostles have taught, in the living oracles, concerning Jesus of Nazareth, have come to him. And just so it is ever the privilege of all to come. Christianity has never changed. Its laws and its ordinances are still the same. And, therefore, we feel perfectly sure, that all those who being taught of God, come to Jesus with humble, obedient, and penitential hearts will be accepted. "For he that cometh to me," says our Redeemer, "I will in no wise cast out."§

But it is not enough that we merely come to Jesus. If we would find rest for our weary souls, we must also take his yoke upon us, and wear it.

The word *yoke*, in this connection, is used metaphorically for the government of Christ; just as the yoke of bondage is sometimes used for the oppressive and tyrannical government of the Egyptians. Like all the other figures of our Redeemer, this is remarkably plain, simple, and expressive. It simply denotes that, as the obedient

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* John i, 33, 34. † John i, 29.
‡ Isaiah liv, 13, and Jer. xxxi, 34. § John vi, 37.

ox submits to the authority of his master by coming under his yoke and wearing it, so all who would seek and find rest for their weary souls, must submit to the laws and institutions of the Messiah.

If the humble inquiring penitent wishes to know how this is to be done, he has only to go to the Acts of the Apostles—a book that was written for the very purpose of illustrating the laws of the kingdom, and particularly those that are primary and elementary. He has only to learn how the three thousand, that came to Jesus on the day of Pentecost, took his yoke upon them. He has only to follow the example of the Ethiopian eunuch, who having believed with all his heart, and having made the good confession, was immediately baptized by the authority of the Lord Jesus, into the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit; and afterward went on his way rejoicing. Such examples make the way of obedience so very plain that none but those whose minds are greatly under the influence of prejudice can fail to understand it. Like the way of holiness, it is so very obvious that the wayfaring men, though simpletons, need not err therein.

But it is of great importance to remember just here, that this yoke is never to be put off. It must be borne patiently and joyfully through life. It is a great mistake to suppose, as some have done, that a mere profession of religion is sufficient; and that afterward we may live as we list, free from all the restraints of law and government. The primitive Christians did not so reason. Their coming to Christ was but the first act of a whole life of obedience. They no longer regarded either themselves or their possessions as their own. They knew that they had been bought with a price, with the precious blood of Jesus, and that they were, therefore, bound by the most sacred obligations to glorify God with both their bodies and their spirits. And hence the inquiry of every true convert, like

Saul of Tarsus, was simply, "Lord, what wilt thou have me to do?" This being ascertained, there was no longer any gainsaying or opposition on his part; no attempt made to compromise with God on any matter; no effort to lighten the burden of the cross.

> "Through floods and flames, if Jesus leads,
> I'll follow where he goes,"

was the heroic cry of every true follower of the Messiah; of each and every one of all that martyred host who now sing the song of Moses and the Lamb on the shores of eternal deliverance. This, too, must be the language of all men, in all climes, in all ages, and under all circumstances, who are bound for the promised land. And hence the necessity of continuing to learn of him as the third and last condition of enjoying that rest that is here offered to the weary soul.

Most of those who entered the kingdom of the Messiah, under the teachings and administration of the apostles, had, at the time, but a very imperfect knowledge of the scheme of redemption. The custom then was, to hear the gospel; to believe it; to repent; to make the good confession; and then to be baptized on the same day or night into the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. But they did not stop there, "They continued steadfast in the apostles' teaching, and in the fellowship, and in the breaking of the loaf, and in the prayers."* They constantly grew in grace, and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.

This then should also be our practice. Human nature is ever the same. Its wants are the same; and its means of religious enjoyment are just the same that the holy Twelve revealed to the world eighteen hundred years ago.

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* Acts ii, 42.

All, therefore, who desire to partake of that rest which remains for the people of God, must continue to feed daily on the pure milk of the word, that they may grow thereby.

But the neglect of this has been the great practical error of nearly the whole Christian world. It is the prolific source of all the evils that have ever come upon the church. If with the humble and confiding spirit of little children, we would all sit down at the feet of Jesus, and learn of him, how very easily we might understand all about the way that leads to honor, to glory, and to immortality. But unfortunately, many are not satisfied with the great simplicity of the Gospel. They must theorize, philosophize, and speculate about the terms and conditions of salvation. They must bring the precepts of the Gospel down to the standard of their own erring reason, and make them consonant with their own perverted feelings, or otherwise practically disregard and neglect them.

Need I pause here to illustrate this allegation? Go to the eighteenth chapter of Matthew. How very plain is the directory that our blessed Saviour there gives for the settlement of all private wrongs and offenses. "If thy brother shall trespass against thee, go and tell him his fault between thee and him alone. If he hear thee, thou hast gained thy brother. But if he will not hear thee, then take with thee one or two more, that in the mouth of two or three witnesses, every word may be established. And if he will not hear them, tell it to the church. But if he neglect to hear the church, let him be unto thee as a heathen man and a publican."*

Does any one misunderstand these precepts? Does any one doubt the propriety of observing them? I presume not. They are too plain to be misunderstood: and their tendency to promote unity, harmony, peace, and love

*Matt. xviii, 15-17.

among brethren, is too obvious to be doubted or gainsayed by any one. And yet how few—alas, how very few practically regard and respect them as they should. How many professors of religion, wholly ignore, in such cases, the authority of their Lord and Master, and make *feeling* their guide, greatly to their own personal injury, as well as to the injury of the church!

Or to take another illustration. The duty of prayer is very often enjoined in the Holy Scriptures. And no one could more clearly and more forcibly teach and illustrate the propriety and the necessity of being importunate in our petitions at a throne of grace, than does Christ himself in his beautifully impressive parable of the unjust judge.* But some claiming to be the followers of Christ, can not reconcile this with the dictates of their own erring reason. They can not see how it is, or why it is, that the prayers of such a creature as man should ever induce or influence God to do any thing. And hence they gravely conclude that there is an error in the Living Oracles; or at least in the plain and obvious meaning of such passages. They become Rationalists. They ignore the plain teachings of Jesus and his apostles, and make their own weak and perverted reason the guide of life. The consequence is, that the closet is soon forsaken; the family altar is neglected; the prayer-meeting is treated with a stoical indifference; and the whole scheme of the divine providence is ignored and neglected as most irrational and absurd. And all this happens, simply because these would-be philosophers are too proud and too vain to sit at the feet of Jesus, and learn of him.

And just so it is with respect to many of the other plain precepts of the Living Oracles. They are either wholly rejected, or practically set aside by the insidious influence of a vain and skeptical philosophy.

* Luke xviii, 1–8.

Need we then wonder, that there is really so little spiritual enjoyment in the church; and that so many nominal professors have failed to realize the rest that is here offered to the weary and heavy laden? Spiritual rest was never promised to the Rationalist, nor to the Mystic, nor to the disciples of Plato, or Aristotle, or Epicurus, or Zeno, or Locke, or Kant, or Cousin. It was never promised to the followers of Luther, or of Calvin, or of Arminius, or of any other uninspired man, however learned, or however pious he may be. It was promised to the faithful followers of Jesus Christ, and to them alone; to those who would come to him, take his yoke upon them, and continue to learn of him. And to them it has always been granted, even under the most trying and adverse circumstances. Ask a Paul, a Peter, a James, a Polycarp, and all the martyred host of God's elect. and they will tell you that, even in the midst of their severest persecutions and greatest afflictions, they had enjoyments which the world could neither give nor take away; and which they would not have exchanged for all the wealth, the honors, and the pleasures of their persecutors.

But why interrogate the dead? Ask the living; ask yourselves, who are the happiest of every community on earth. Are they the most wealthy? Not generally. Are they the most powerful and influential members of the body politic? Very seldom is this true. Are they the most learned in the arts and sciences. This is sometimes the case, but not always. But whether they be rich or poor, bond or free, male or female, learned or unlearned, they are always to be found among those who live nearest to God; and who with an humble, confiding, and contrite spirit, endeavor to understand and to obey, in letter and in spirit, all the teachings and the precepts of our blessed and adorable Redeemer.

How very easy then it is for us all to be happy if we

would. We can not all be rich in the things of this world. We can not all be legislators, or governors, or judges of the nation. We can not all be poets, historians, or philosophers. But, thank God, we can all be Christians. We can all come to Christ, take his yoke upon us, learn of him, and find rest to our souls. We can all overcome and sit down with our Redeemer on his throne, even as he overcame and has sat down with the Father on his throne. We can spend an eternity of unmingled blessedness with Moses, Job, and Daniel; with Peter, James, and John; with our pious fathers, and mothers, and sisters, and brothers who have gone before us; and with all the pure and holy out of every kindred, and tongue, and people, and nation, who have washed their robes, and made them white in the blood of the Lamb. Surely then this is enough. Surely

"A hope so great and so divine,
May trials well endure;
And purify our souls from sin,
As Christ himself is pure."

Then, dear readers, let us all endeavor to be more faithful while here; for in due season we shall reap if we faint not. Let us *strive* to enter in at the straight gate, and to walk in the narrow way, as Christ has himself commanded us. And giving *all diligence*, let us ever add to our faith virtue; and to virtue, knowledge; and to knowledge, temperance; and to temperance, patience; and to patience, godliness; and to godliness, brotherly kindness; and to brotherly kindness, love to all men; that finally, we may have a safe and triumphant entrance into the everlasting kingdom of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. May God add his blessing; and to his name be the glory.

SERMON VI.

ECCLESIASTIC POLITY.

BY A. I. HOBBS.

By organization, God has most felicitously and efficiently manifested his Wisdom, Power, and Benevolence. Wisdom in designing, Power in combining, and Benevolence in directing the forces material, or physical, to the creature's good. These attributes of the Deity may be studied no less profitably in the animalcula, so infinitesimal that hundreds might find a pleasure ground on a needle's point, than in the wonderful adjustment of the myriad systems of worlds, wooed by the "sweet influences of the Pleiades."

In God's physical government, He is sole lawgiver. Every adjustment has been made by the Divine touch. The Great God is ever present with omnipotent energy, to uphold all things by the word of His power.

Is it supposable that the All-wise Disposer would delight to manifest His glory in organizing material forces, and yet would allow the moral forces of the universe to go ungirt by His power and undirected by His law? Surely not. In the moral realm we will not look in vain for the benevolent adjustings of the Divine hand.

In pursuance of the purposes of God, our Saviour came into the world to establish an organism, that in the highest degree should show the glory of the Most High. A suitable, an infinitely wise adjustment of many parts to act unitedly as a complex whole. More fearfully and wonderfully made than the human body. More firmly ce-

mented than any building or temple. More permanent and powerful than any earthly kingdom. Yet, resembling all these, when viewed from different stand points. This organism, the church of the living God, was to be built upon the Everlasting Rock. Sinners, rough-hewn from the world's quarries, were to be dressed by the inimitable chiselings of the Holy Spirit, to become living stones in this spiritual house.

As we can not conceive of organizations without organs, and organs without office; so we can not conceive of office without law defining official relations and duties. Hence, *a priori*, it is absurd to suppose that the Great Head of the church has designated for His kingdom no form of government. As well might we suppose that He had organized the human body and left it without law. Indeed the very statement is irreconcilably paradoxical. When men undertake to do anything, however, of doubtful right and propriety, we naturally expect them to build upon some fallacy. Strange as it may seem, this has ever been the corner stone upon which all creed-mongers of the past, have attempted to rear imposing ecclesiastic structures.

Perhaps some captious critic will say:—The Scriptures only set forth the general form of church government as monarchical, not giving us any specific statutory directions as to the number or kinds of officers, their relations, duties, nor the manner of their selection, etc., etc. Why, herein is a strange thing, that the church is a monarchy under the unlimited authority of Christ, and yet He does not legislate for His kingdom. To whom does the right belong, or upon whom is the duty to prescribe as to the matters in hand, but the King? Or has He delegated this prerogative to any body of men now living? If so, let them present their credentials to the inspection of a world too long imposed upon by such unsupported pretensions.

The admission that the general form of government is given, and that that form is monarchical, is an admission that whoever would attempt to wield any of the prerogatives of the monarch, without permission, and such permission as would be good and sufficient credentials to the world, ought to be treated as an interloper—Guilty of an act, which, if performed in an earthly government would subject the perpetrator to the loss of his life. This may seem hard, but is it not true? I do not mean to say that those who do such things in the church, mean to do wrong, but this does not change the nature of the act.

There is an element of truth in the objector's mind that does not take shape in his words. It may be illustrated thus:—A general orders an inferior officer to execute a certain movement against the enemy, but leaves it discretionary with him, whether he shall take one baggage wagon or one hundred. Whether he shall march by day or by night. Whether he shall ration his army from the commissariat, or live off the country. Whether he shall attack at sunrise or sunset. Now, in reference to the thing to be done, the officer has no discretion. In this, possibility is his only limit. As to the manner of executing this movement, it is always to be understood whether mentioned or not, that he shall obey the command subject to the laws of war. So the great Captain of our salvation has ordered us to "move upon the enemy's works." This we must do, restricted only by the laws regulating this warfare. The genius of the gospel in its universality of promulgation and application, under all forms of civil government, and in all conditions of human society, demands for the subaltern in things accidental, the largest liberty compatible with the dignity and majesty of its Great Author. The all-wise Head of the church, *could* have given us explicit directions for every phase of our work, but the world would scarcely contain the books,

Hence, in precept, precedent, and general principle by Himself and the apostles, our Lord has given us all that pertains to the government, perpetuity and prosperity of the church.

Therefore, while in the things to be done, and also in the manner of doing some things, we have no discretion, yet amid the ever shifting surroundings of the church in all ages, countries, and conditions, there will be much of an advisory and executory character left to human wisdom and prudence, coming under the law of expediency. Still we must never trench upon the divine wisdom, by following the dictates of human wisdom, when we have from the law of Christ, precept or example directing. Nor must we assume to bind upon the consciences of men, to believe or do, that for which we have not a thus saith the Lord, or apostolic precedent clearly made out.

Having selected twelve men as ambassadors, to whom one more was afterward added, Christ returned to His native Heaven. Through these were sent forth His imperial edicts, for the development of His kingdom on earth. A careful scrutiny of the words and deeds of the apostles, will disclose to us the law of Christ, respecting His kingdom—its government and work. For it must be remembered that the Lord promised to ratify in heaven what these men did and taught on earth.

Because these only infallible sources of information on these subjects have been ignored, various forms of church government have been foisted upon the Lord's people. These forms have been multifarious and centripetalized, or centrifugalized, as one or the other of these forces has predominated in any given age. Hence, ever-recurring and sometimes violent perturbations have marked the religious orbit. But with the Christ as the center of light and attraction, these forces will be equipoised. Then the

religion of the Son of God will flood the world with His reflected glory.

Simplicity and freedom from cumbrous ecclesiastical machinery were the crowning glory and strength of primitive Christianity. Each congregation, with its own proper officers duly elected and qualified, constituted a little municipality under Christ. It was independent of other congregations, however, for municipal purposes only. Beyond these, all Christian congregations were bound together by the indissoluble bonds of love to God and man. An intercommunity of interests and affection, with homogeneity in everything that made them distinctive from the world, constituted them, for the glory of God, and the conversion of the world, a consolidated power.

No sooner, however, had a scheming demagogical, worldly policy, and corrupt ambition taken control, than the church was despoiled of her simplicity, unity, purity and power. By accepting an alliance with the state she was chained as a captive Queen to the wheels of sin's triumphal chariot. Instead of standing up before the throne in her heaven born purity and majesty, tempering every department of society with her influence and virtue, she meanly consented to fall into the foul embrace of a worldly, sensual, church-state policy.

Perhaps, in nothing was the church more damaged than by replacing Christianity's original elements of power and prosperity, with the vain, ostentatious pomp, circumstance and spirit of civil government. Forgetting Christ's words: "Be not ye called Rabbi, master, for one is your master even Christ, and all ye are brethren;" "The kings of the gentiles seek to exercise lordship over them, but it shall not be so among you;" orders of clergy, correspondent to the various orders of ministers in the state, must be had by the church. These must be the ecclesiastic pyramid—a monument of more folly than the pyramids of Egypt—

whose apex should be the king or queen; whose base must be the common herd or plebeian's ecclesiastic. As new ideas in religion must clothe themselves in new words; for distinction, these church plebeians were called "the laity." This pyramid was perfected during the dark ages. The Roman Catholic church has the doubtful honor of rearing a higher one than any other people. Not, however, exactly in accordance with the original draft. Instead of making the king or queen the apex, as head of the state and church, the Pope claimed the honor of head of the state, because he was acknowledged head of the church. This accomplished, he who blushed not to call himself "God's Vicegerent on earth, His Holiness the Lord God the Pope," successfully constituted himself the fountain of temporal as well as spiritual power.

At first glance, that the world should yield to such claims made in the name of religion, might seem to be a great victory for Christianity. From one standpoint it was, but such a victory as was religion's defeat, and would have been the ruin of the world, had not the monk of Erfurth torn apart the miter and the crown.

Episcopalianism in England attempted to rescue Christianity from the thraldom of papal tyranny. But after some abortive efforts, fell herself a victim to church-state combination. She weighed down her laity with a pyramid built after the Constantinian model.

John Wesley, wearied with the spiritual *ennui* of Episcopalianism, burst the fetters of a cold formalism. Gathering about him many admirers, he succeeded in firing them with his own electrified zeal and spiritual activity. The graveyard orderlines and beauty of Episcopalianism were about to be marred by the ploughshare of Mr. Wesley's enthusiasm. Hence, persecution was called upon to let loose the dogs of war. Mr. Wesley was still, however, a High Churchman, and indeed remained so, and died in the

Church of England. He would be satisfied, therefore, if he could only find some place where the movement he had set on foot, could come to perfection under the auspices of a diluted Episcopalian regime. His eye turned anxiously to the new world. He saw a people here who had fled from regal ecclesiasticism. Whose political notions were averse to monarchy or despotism in church or state. He found nothing favorable to reproduce here the politico-ecclesiastic polity of England. Hence, he ordered a system of church government, called Methodist Episcopacy, with Episcopalianism of England,

> In element, essentially the same,
> Made somewhat sweeter by an added name

It must be admitted, however, to the honor of that great and good man, that he waived educational influence and training to such an extent, that he did not authorize the assumptions of power made by the bishop, who stands now at the apex of the Methodist pyramid.

Our heartiest gratitude is due to the Giver of all good that he has given us a civil government modeled to a certain extent after, and conservative of, the government of Christ's church. With the advance of republicanism and the elevation of the masses, we may expect to see the followers of Christ re-investing themselves with the rights originally given them by the Magna Charta of Christian liberty. Returning to the simplicity of primitive Christianity and doing away with clerical domination.

Then those Ashdodical terms, clergy and laity, will no no longer disgrace our religious literature. I hate them in the church, as I hate the terms patrician and plebeian in the state. The former is the symbol of an unrighteous aristocracy in the church. The latter, of the deep abasement of the masses of unofficial Christians.

The last four years have been terrible years of blood.

Republicanism has again passed successfully the ordeal, on the forum and on the battle-field. While her strugglings have called out the highest patriotism of Americans, and awakened the deepest sympathies of the millions of earth's oppressed, we have the strange anomaly of a majority of more than eighteen thousand Methodists in this country voting against "lay representation." Deliberately voting to be slaves to clerical domination. To be plebeians in the church. History will record this as a remarkable instance of clerical influence or "lay" folly.

May the Lord hasten the day, when all His followers will discard all castes and human distinctions in the church, and be content to stand upon a sublime equality as brethren with none but Jesus, Master.

CHURCH OFFICERS.

At the first and during the formative period of the church, there were two classes of officers—ordinary and extraordinary. The former were sub-divided into evangelists, elders or bishops and deacons. The latter, into apostles, prophets and workers of miracles. Correspondent, in number at least, to this classification, were two kinds of powers—natural and supernatural. The former were sub-divided into faith, hope and love. The latter, into tongues, prophecy and knowledge.

The co-existence of these two kinds of agencies, and instrumentalities during the formative period of the church, is by no means anomalous in God's plan of operating. When the work of forming the physical universe was going on, they co-existed. When the work was completed, then the extraordinary agencies and supernatural instrumentalities ceased, but the ordinary and natural continued. So it was in forming and continuing the Mosaic polity. So, when God created man. The extraordinary and supernatural had their play until he became a living soul, then life was

perpetuated by the ordinary and natural. Precisely so, in forming the church the body of Christ, it became a living soul by the extraordinary and supernatural; and it is no more natural for a man to live by inspiring the atmosphere, than for the church to live by inspirations of faith, hope and love. These are to be vitalizing elements. No more can the life of the church be sustained without them, than could the life of a man, in air exhausted of oxygen.

If the extraordinary and supernatural cease when the formative process is completed, how vain to suppose that the apostles have successors in our day. As well might one claim to be the successor of a prophet, or worker of miracles. They have no successors, nor could they have from the very nature and design of their work. God never works miracles of knowledge or power, except in creation or in making a new revelation.

Besides, apostles were official witnesses for Christ. Can a witness have a successor? You may record and perpetuate his testimony, and it shall be true and valid for all time, but to become his successor you can not.

As, after the church had reached its majority, extraordinary agents and supernatural instrumentalities were to cease, and natural instrumentalities, as faith, hope, and love, were to abide, so should ordinary official agents, as evangelists, bishops and deacons continue.

EVANGELIST,

From *evangelidzo*, means a proclaimer of good news. *Evangelion*, or evangel, is the good news itself. From the fact that primitive preachers, under the apostles, proclaimed the evangel of salvation through Christ, they came to be officially called evangelists. Hence, in the Scriptures and in religious literature, this word has a technical or appropriated meaning. It occurs three times in the New Testament.

Inspiration was not a *sine qua non* to the evangelist's office, and we have no reason to believe that any one, officially an evangelist, ever possessed it. Although "Philip the evangelist" did work miracles. Timothy certainly did not, for he was commanded "to study to show himself approved with God, as a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth." Some Timothies of our day might profit by this advice, and save a great deal of shame, if they would study more the Word of God, and not wait for the movings of the Holy Spirit, vainly expecting what the Lord promises to none of our time. Certainly they could then divide the word of truth without so mangling it as to evoke from the world only a momentary pity for Christianity, but a permanent contempt for its professed ministers.

Paul to Timothy, 2 Ep. iv, 5, says: "Do the work of an evangelist, make full proof of your ministry." Upon this we may remark, that the evangelist has to do a work *sui generis*—of its own kind.

The epistles to Timothy and Titus were directed to evangelists. Reason suggests that we should find in them the work of an evangelist described. Our expectations are not disappointed. They were to preach the word, reprove, rebuke, admonish, to set in order the things wanting, to ordain elders in the churches. In short, to become public defenders of the faith, and proclaimers of the Gospel. Their field was the world. Where "human foot hath trod" or human heart hath bled is the evangelist's diocese.

It is not to be understood that itineracy is a necessity to their work, but an accident. Timothy abode a long time at Ephesus. His work comprehended the establishment and setting in order of new churches, as also the teaching and enlarging of old ones. Indeed, we can not separate from the spirit of the evangelistic office a

supervisory care over the general interests of Zion. Not that the evangelist should lord it over God's heritage, but he should care for the churches in the spirit of love, with a deep and pungent sense of his responsibility to the Great Head of the church.

That spirit now so rife which seeks to localize and monopolize the labor of the most talented preachers, thus cutting them off from all active sympathy with general interests, can not be too strongly reprobated. Especially since the supply of evangelists is so unequal to the demand. Some of our most gifted preachers, are swallowed up in the circumference of a county-town locality, and can see nor feel any interest in any general work. Hence, we seldom find them at the general missionary meetings; and when we do, they are so pressed by some local affair, that they can only stay long enough barely to save their credit. In the same way are general educational enterprises neglected. We shall not attempt to locate the blame for this state of things, but leave each one to take a generous share to himself. We do not object to preachers abiding, like Timothy, a long time at one place; but we do object to this selfish forgetfulness of all interests outside of a given locality, whether by preachers or people.

To one in need it may be very grateful to pour rich stores of wealth at his feet, but it would better comport with a wise Christian benevolence to share with all the needy, since the unsearchable riches of Christ are sufficient for all.

ELDERS OR BISHOPS.

The former term represents the Greek *presbuteros*, which is the comparative degree of *presbus* from *presbeuo*— to be old. Hence, *presbuteros* nominally means an older or elder man. The latter represents the Greek *episkopos* from the verb *episkopeo*, to oversee. Hence, *episkopos* is a guardian or overseer. It occurs five times in the New

Testament; four times translated bishop, once, overseer. Its cognate *episkopee* indicates office of oversight. See 1 Tim. iii, 1. The word *episkopee* does not of itself indicate the kind of oversight demanded of a Christian bishop, nor would the word *episkopos* indicate a bishop any more than an overseer of the poor. But the scriptural use and application of these terms does both. Acts xx, 28: "Feed the flock of God over which the Holy Spirit hath made you *episkopous*, overseers." Phil. i, 1: "Paul and Timotheus, the servants of Jesus Christ, to all the saints in Christ Jesus which are at Philippi, with the bishops and deacons." 1 Tim. iii, 2: "A bishop, *episkopon*, then must be blameless." Titus i, 7: The same. 1 Pet. ii, 27: "For ye were as sheep going astray, but now are returned to the shepherd and bishop of your souls." In all the above occurrences but one, the word *episkopos* evidently indicates an office in the congregation.

From the first passage we learn, 1. That the relation of the bishop to the congregation, is analogous to that of the shepherd to the flock; only one is spiritual, the other physical. As the shepherd watches the flock to ward off the beast of prey; to lead them beside the still waters and over the green pastures; to bring back the wandering to the fold; to go in and out before them, and treat them with such tenderness that they will love his voice and follow him with cheerful alacrity; so the shepherd of the spiritual fold should smite the wolf in sheep's raiment, that comes but to "scatter, tear, and slay," and lead the flock into the rich pastures of divine truth, and beside the still waters of divine grace, and follow the lost one through the labyrinths of Satan's devices, and bear him gently back to the fold. To go in and out before them in such holiness, with such unctuous piety of heart and purity of life, and genial love for each and for all, that every one

will hail his presence with delight, and be uneasy if he is out of sight.

2. We learn from this passage that the Holy Spirit constituted or ordered over one congregation a plurality of bishops—overseers—by King James' Episcopalian translation. Sectarianism, in order to sustain itself, in this place, as in some others, has dared to tamper with the utterances of the Divine Spirit. Why did not King James' revisers translate *episkopous* bishops, instead of overseers, as they did in every other place, only observing the nominal accident, number? Does the context forbid it? O, no! what then? This is the reason: Episcopalianism must have one bishop over a plurality of congregations in order to maintain its diocesan episcopacy. But this word, translated here as in other places, would have thrown heaven's veto into the face of Episcopalianism, against its distinctive peculiarity, and in favor of a plurality of bishops over one congregation. Hence the attempt at imposition by mistranslating; whereby they would make the apostle seem to be talking to a different class of officers from bishops. Yet, after such partisan and sectarian trifling with the Word of God, there are those who are ready to throw up their hands in affected horror, when it is proposed to revise King James' version and make it a more perfect transcript of the inspired originals. This work to be done, too, not by one religious party, but by scholars of all denominations. O, foolish one, let silence be thy best retreat, lest blatant error make thy shame appear!

From the second passage it appears, that although bishops and deacons are saints, yet saints are not necessarily bishops and deacons. Else these distinctions are meaningless. Hence, bishops and deacons were the officers of the congregation.

From the third and fourth passages, it is clearly indicated, that although the bishop is an officer in the church,

yet not every disciple may aspire to the office. *e. g.* The novice is excluded.

It is assumed by some, that the elder and bishop are two grades of officers. No wonder. The ecclesiastic pyramid would not rise high enough to afford sufficient altitude to the modern bishop, or the Pope without numerous steps. Nor could there be obtained so large a view of the kingdoms of this world.

The following arguments are conclusive that they do not indicate two different grades of officers, but are two appellatives for one officer.

1. These words are used interchangeably and applied to the same officer.

Proof—Acts xx, 17: And from Miletus he sent to Ephesus, and called the elders, *presbuterous*, of the church. Acts xx, 28, addressing these elders, he said: Take heed, therefore, unto yourselves, and to all the flock of God over which the Holy Spirit hath made you, *episkopous*, overseers, or bishops. Tit. 1, 5: For this cause left I thee in Crete, that thou shouldst set in order the things that are wanting, and ordain elders, *presbuterous*, in every city. v. 7. For a bishop, *episkopon*, must be blameless.

In all these cases the same official is designated by the two appellatives, *presbuteros* and *episkopos*, used interchangeably.

2. The same duties that are enjoined upon elders, are enjoined upon bishops.

Proof—Acts xx, 28: and 1 Pet. v, 1–2.

3. The same qualifications are required of both. Proof —1 Tim. iii, Tit. 1.

Hence, we conclude they are the same officer, with different and interchangeable appellatives. The title *episkopos*, bishop, being applicable because of the nature of the office work. The title *presbuteros*, elder, applied, because men of advanced age and experience were usually selected to fill the office. It is not probable, however, that old age

was indispensable to one's eligibility to the office. Many a Christian, comparatively young in years, is older in knowledge and Christian experience, than some with temples hoary from the frosts of life.

QUALIFICATIONS.

Of these there are twenty-four. Sixteen positive, eight negative.

POSITIVE.

Bishop must be blameless. Not justly censurable. 2. Must be the husband of one wife. Not a polygamist. 3. Must be vigilant. 4. Must be sober. Moderate, not a hot-spur. 5. Must be of good behavior, courteous. 6. Must be hospitable. 7. Must be apt or fit to teach. 8. Must be patient. 9. Must rule his own house well. 10. Must have his children in subjection with all gravity. 11. Must be of good report among those without. 12. Must be a lover of good men. 13. Must be just, honest. 14. Must be holy, pious, religious. 15. Must be temperate. Having self-control. 16. Must hold fast the faithful word or true doctrine.

NEGATIVE.

1. Not given to wine. 2. No striker. Not quarrelsome. 3. Not a maker of money by base methods. 4. Not a brawler. Averse to contention. 5. Not covetous. Avaricious, inordinately desirous of wealth. 6. Not a novice. A neophyte or new convert. 7. Not self-willed. Haughty, imperious, arrogant. 8. Not soon angry. Not prone to anger, irascible, petulant.

Perhaps one is ready to say, much is required of a bishop. What elder shall be able to stand? Various methods have been invented to soften the lines of this picture. Some say, that if a man possess all these negative qualifications, and, but one of the positive, he is eligible to the office. That to make a complete eldership in any con-

gregation, we ought not to expect to find these qualifications in any one man. That we ought to select a number sufficient to combine them all, taking care that each one selected shall have at least one of the positive and all the negative qualifications. That the Apostle is describing the office and not the officer. To my mind, this is but a genteel way of pleading an excuse for the failure, of too many of us in this age, to grow in grace and in the knowledge of Christ. It seems to me, if a man had all these negative, and but one of the positive qualifications, he would find it difficult to establish his claim to the Christian character, to say nothing of the bishoprick.

The greatest obstacle in the way of many is the required aptness to teach. This, of all the requisites, should be the least alarming. If any one not a neophyte, with ordinary ability, interposes this objection to the exercising of the functions of the eldership, he would tacitly confess a conscious moral unfitness, or culpable neglect to improve opportunities enjoyed. Without reformation, such a one only has a name to live, while dead.

If we could divest our minds of some of the fastidious notions of this age, and return to the simplicity of the apostolic age, when Christians were more Christian and less critic; when they had quite as much head and more heart in religion, when they taught in love, and learned in meekness the simple word of our blessed Master; perhaps the required aptness to teach would not be such a lion in the way.

If the lines of this picture need to be softened, I would rather suppose that Divine Wisdom, here, as everywhere else, to put our moral nature on the stretch, lifts a high standard, while Divine grace stands ready to pardon our failure to reach it, upon an honest trial. Aim at the sun lest you fall below the moon, is a maxim ever to be observed, both in Christian ethics and enterprise.

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DEACONS.

They must be grave, not double-tongued. Not given to much wine. Not makers of money by base methods. Holding the mystery of the faith in a pure conscience. Must not be polygamists, but must rule their own houses well. The word *diakonos* indicates a servant, but not any specific kind of service. From the objects impelling to the selection of the seven at Jerusalem, it is generally agreed, that their service respects the temporal interests of the church. This office is no sinecure, but one of ardent work and great importance to the welfare, prosperity and influence of Christ's kingdom.

The deacons of a congregation should constitute its financial board to plan and supervise the raising of all moneys necessary for all purposes. They should look after and care for the widow and orphan, the needy, the sick, the dying, the dead. When the deaconship shall be brought up to a proper efficiency, we will no more be compelled to witness the humiliating sight of Christians seeking avenues for systematic benevolence through the various human organizations. We may berate these organizations, and cry out that they are plucking laurels from the brow of Christianity. But if we would supercede them, we must bring up the eleemosynary department of Christianity, thus doing away their necessity.

ECCLESIASTIC AUTHORITY.

The highest church tribunal is a well ordered congregation of Christians. Under the law of Christ, such a body is the fountain of ecclesiastic authority. Every congregation is the supreme executor of the law of Christ, within its own limits. All officers spring from it and are amenable to it, as are all its members.

While teaching congregational independence, we must carefully avoid the paralyzing extreme of congregational

isolation and selfishness. It requires all Christians everywhere, to constitute the church of Christ in its entirety. Congregations are only the church of Christ in homogeneous sub-divisions, as an army, for greater convenience and efficiency. And as the sub-divisions of an army have their own camping grounds and police regulations, but are all under the control of one mind or will, for the general purposes of their organization, so all Christian congregations may have peculiar internal regulations, nevertheless, they are all under one Head, which is the Christ the Lord.

There are great general movements, which from their magnitude and the inefficiency of individual effort, must be co-operative. As the missionary work, supplying destitute saints, erecting colleges, schools, etc. We have in the epistles instances of such co-operations. But these co-operations were not through packed, legislative, dictatorial, ecclesiastic bodies, who made the congregations slaves instead of themselves becoming agents to carry out their will.

As instances of congregational municipal sovereignty, we may cite the following:—the ex-communication of the incestuous person at Corinth. 1 Cor. v, 4-5. The refractory person was to be disowned by the church. Matt. xviii, 17: The command, "withdraw yourselves from every brother that walketh disorderly," was given to the congregation. 2 Thes. iii, 6. In 2 Cor. viii,19, Paul speaks of Titus and the brother who was "chosen of the congregations to travel with us." Throughout the scriptures the congregation is recognized as the source of authority to its evangelists, officers and agents. The act of any congregational officer or agent duly accredited, is the act of the church.

ELECTION AND INSTALLMENT OF OFFICERS.

Excepting the case of Matthias, we have only one case of election. The seven deacons at Jerusalem. One case,

however, is amply sufficient for our direction if it clearly evolves a principle of procedure.

Acts vi, 2-3: "Then the twelve called the multitude of the disciples unto them and said: It is not reason that we should leave the word of God, and serve tables. Wherefore, brethren, look ye out among you seven men, * * * whom we may appoint over this business. And they chose (elected) Stephen," etc. We learn from this. 1. The original election was by the people. 2. Even the apostles did not assume the authority to make the choice, nor in any way interfere to trammel the choice of the congregation.

We have no case of bishops being elected by the people, nor by any one else. Since, then, we have one class of officers elected by the congregation, and no intimation that the rule should be changed as to the others; and, since all officers are but the agents of the congregation, and amenable to them, we are forced to the conclusion that none has a right to assume official prerogatives, but by their consent. This conclusion is not to be doubted in the light of church history, for that confirms it with great particularity.

Election to, not identical with induction into office. By some the reverse of this is contended for. That any one elected to an office is *ipso facto* invested with all its powers. That election is ordination. This position is usually taken by those opposed to imposition of hands in the ordination ceremony. Their opposition to the ordination ceremony arises more from an untempered aversion to the papistic claims usually made when hands are imposed, rather than from an achromatic conviction of the impropriety or wrongfulness of the ceremony itself. In this, as in everything else, "to the law and the testimony." Acts vi: Tells us the people (*eklego*), chose the seven, and

the apostles were to (*kathisteemi*,) appoint them over the business of serving tables. Tit. i, 5: Titus was commanded to (*kathisteemi*) ordain or appoint elders in every city.

In Acts vi, the same word is used to indicate the appointment of the "seven" by the apostles, as is used to tell Titus what to do in respect to elders. While a different word, *eklego*, to elect, indicates the part the people took in the matter. *Kathisteemi* means to place over, or to install. Inasmuch, as the apostles were to do this after the election by the disciples, we conclude: 1. That an election is not ordination. 2. That in the scriptural order it is the antecedent, and ordination the subsequent. 3. That ordination is a formal induction into office.

Titus was to ordain, that is, by this precedent, to set over the churches as elders those previously elected by the disciples. Now, if to ordain, is simply to elect as some contend, then the congregations have no voice in the selection of officers. For Titus, not the disciples, was commanded to ordain. This position transfers to the preachers the whole business of making officers. It augments clerical power insupportably, which, is the very thing those who confound election and ordination wish to prevent.

What was the Ordination Ceremony? The seven deacons were ordained by imposition of hands, fasting, and prayer. Barnabas and Paul ordained (*cheirotoneo* by stretching forth the hand), with fasting and prayer. Barnabas and Paul were set apart to the work of evangelism, by imposition of hands, fasting, and prayer. Acts xiii, 3. Timothy had the hands of the *presbuterion*, eldership, imposed upon him, the presumption is, with fasting and prayer, to constitute him an evangelist.

How, then, was Titus to ordain? Evidently, after the people had made their choice, if the choice did not conflict with the organic law of the kingdom, he was to commis-

sion or install into office the persons chosen, by imposition of hands, fasting, and prayer. This is our model.

Who may conduct the Ordination Ceremony? The official relation in the church, as in the state, is based upon an expressed or implied covenant. The electors offer the elect certain prerogatives and honors, with their cordial support in his onerous work, if he will enter upon and faithfully discharge the duties of a given office. He accepts the terms of the covenant. Now it becomes necessary to let the parties appear together and formally ratify the covenant. If the Lord had not given us a form of ratification, we might lay our wisdom and prudence under contribution for an appropriate form. We might adopt the ancient form of passing a furnace and burning lamp between the sundered parts of a slain animal; or build a covenant pillar of stones. But the Lord has saved us this trouble by giving us a form of ratification most beautiful and impressive.

As it has been the custom from time immemorial to impose hands upon the head, as when a blessing was pronounced, or something was transferred from one to another, as in the sin-offering. And, as in this covenant, authority to act officially is to be given the officer elect; what more fitting than that hands should be imposed amid the solemnities of fasting and prayer. He only is competent, therefore, to impose hands, whom the congregation permit. They will usually permit the bishop or evangelist.

Men may scoff and say, all this is but a form. Be it so. The Lord has ordained it; and wisely, too, for such a form, all radiant with divine philosophy and fitness, is needed to impress officers with the immense responsibilities assumed, and the disciples with their acknowledged obligations—Aaron and Hur like—to stay the hands of their official agents, that Israel may prevail.

CONCLUSION.

We think ourselves warranted in saying now, that the ecclesiastic polity of the apostles is found neither in the diocesan episcopacy of the Romish nor English church, nor in Genevan Presbyterianism, nor yet in a loose, disjointed, heterogeneous congregationalism; but, in a homogeneous congregationalism. Each congregation independent for purposes purely prudential and municipal, with a deaconship for temporal interests, an eldership for spiritual interests, and evangelists for spokesmen to the world; defenders and propagators of the faith. We have in the bishop's office an episcopate, and in the eldership, a presbytery. Not one bishop over many congregations, but a plurality over one. Nor a presbytery over many congregations, but a presbytery over every congregation. Nor yet a General Conference, nor General Assembly, nor bishop, nor the "Universal Father, His Holiness the Pope," over all.

May the Lord help us to build Zion after the pattern given in the mount of Inspiration. To rear its walls higher and higher, and gild the dome of God's temple with golden glory, that the rays from the Sun of Righteousness, as He sets beyond time's western hills, may linger there, blazing, restive, and leaping to kiss the first flash of eternity's light.

SERMON VII.

THE LAW OF PARDON AS ELIMINATED FROM THE COMMISSION.

BY J. S. SWEENEY.

To ascertain the terms of pardon offered to the alien under the Gospel Dispensation, is the object of this sermon. And as to the importance of the subject not a sentence is deemed necessary. But a few definitive remarks shall constitute the preliminary.

1. The inquiry is for the terms on which *an alien* can obtain pardon. That an offending citizen of Christ's kingdom can obtain pardon—and must, if at all—by repentance and prayer, is very generally conceded by Christians; but that these simply are the terms on which the Gospel offers pardon to an *alien*, is denied.

2. Pardon, *under the Gospel Dispensation*, is treated of, and not pardon under former dispensations. And the Gospel Dispensation can be dated no further back than to the time our Lord gave commission to his apostles to "Go into all the world, and preach the Gospel to every creature." Touching this point, Richard Watson, the great Methodist theologian, in his Institutes, says, after citing the commission as recorded by Mark:

"To understand the force of these words of our Lord, it must be observed that the gate of the common salvation was only now for the first time going to be opened to the Gentile nations. He himself had declared that in his personal ministry he was not sent but to the lost sheep of the house of Israel; and he had restricted his disciples in like

manner not only from ministering to the Gentiles, but from entering any city of the Samaritans."—P. 630.

Again, the same writer, same book, after speaking of the baptism of John and that practiced by the disciples of our Lord previous to his resurrection, says:

"For since the new covenant was not then fully perfected, it could not be proposed in any other way than to prepare them that believed in Christ, by its partial but increasing manifestation in the discourses of our Lord, for the full declaration both of its benefits and obligations, which declaration was not made until after his resurrection."—P. 632.

But *divine* authority for this definition will appear as we proceed with the investigation.

3. The terms pardoned, saved, forgiven, and the phrase remission of sins, will be used as expressive of the same idea—will be used interchangeably.

4. Pardon and conversion, in its popular acceptation, are two distinct things. Conversion is generally understood to refer solely to an internal change; and that it does refer to such a change, when not used in its most extended sense, is not denied. But pardon never indicates such a change, except that it may imply that such a change has passed. Conversion, in the sense generally assigned it, passes in the mind and heart of the person converted; while pardon passes in the mind of the Lord, and is something done *for* the person pardoned. Pardon comes after conversion, and is dependent upon it. This will appear from one or two scriptures:

"Lest at any time they should see with their eyes, and hear with their ears, and should understand with their heart, and should be converted, and I should heal them." Matt. xiii, 15.

"*Heal*," here, evidently means *pardon*, and it will be

observed, comes after conversion, and is something the Lord does *for* the converted person.

"Repent ye, therefore, and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out." Acts iii, 19.

Evidently the phrase, "that your sins may be blotted out," means simply, that your sins may be *remitted*. And here also we see that remission of sins, or pardon, comes after conversion, and depends upon it. Let it be constantly borne in mind, then, that by pardon, conversion is not meant.

These definitions understood, and we are prepared to proceed with the proposed investigation.

All who are laboring for the salvation of sinners must, on a final reference, refer to our Lord's last commission for all the divine authority they have for so laboring. From what other source has any man living derived any sufficient authority for offering pardon to a sinner on any terms? To think of this question but for a single moment brings us to the answer.

As, therefore, all our authority for offering pardon to sinners, for preaching repentance and remission of sins in the name of the Lord, is derived from this commission, it follows irresistibly, that we are only authorized to propound pardon *on the terms therein stipulated*. And this view of the matter should, were it possible to do so, swell the importance of this great commission in our estimation, in the investigation of this subject. To this important document, then, we are now ready to give attention:

"Go ye therefore and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost." Matt. xxviii, 19.

"Go ye into all the world, and preach the Gospel to every creature. He that believes and is baptized shall

be saved; but he that believes not shall be damned." Mark xvi, 15, 16.

"Thus it is written, and thus it behooved Christ to suffer and to rise from the dead the third day, and that repentance and remission of sins should be preached in his name among all nations, beginning at Jerusalem." Luke xxiv, 46, 47.

"As my Father hath sent me, even so send I you. And when he had said this, he breathed on them, and said, Receive ye the Holy Ghost: Whosesoever sins ye remit, they are remitted unto them, and whosesoever sins, ye retain, they are retained." John xx, 21-23.

Here we have before us our Lord's great commission, given for the christianization of the world, as recorded by four inspired writers; and from these records we are to eliminate the terms of pardon. And it is noticeable, that these records are not given in the same words. Yet there is the utter absence of anything like contradiction. For where the same facts are touched by any two or more of them, they perfectly accord. Yet in their testimony, they do not seem to notice the same points; and narrate them in the same order. But so far from throwing any doubt over their testimony, as has been claimed, this circumstance strengthens it, and to thinking persons, displays the wisdom of God. As illustrative of this, let us suppose an analogous case: A, is accused of the murder of B, and is brought to trial for the crime. Four witnesses are introduced to prove his guilt. They testify each to facts not noticed by the others, but wherein they touch the same facts, there is perfect harmony. In all their testimony, there is no contradiction; and taken as a whole, it establishes the guilt of A. Now, because these witnesses, do not all testify to precisely the same facts in the same words, shall their testimony be ruled out of court? Certainly not. And again, must not the jurors in making

II. *Baptist:* (1) Teaching, (2) repentance, (3) faith, (4) pardon, and (5) baptism.

III. *Christian:* (1) Teaching, (2) faith, (3) repentance, (4) baptism, and (5) pardon.

Are all fairly represented here? It may be said, that the Pedobaptists are not—that they do not put baptism first in order, as they are here represented. But still it is contended that the order here given them is correct—that is, that it is their order. It will not be denied that this is their order in case of infants—that baptism is the first thing in the commission they give to them. Well, it is submitted, that this is their rule, and any thing else they may practice in case of adults is merely exceptional. It is granted that they do sometimes baptize persons who have been previously taught and who believe, but it is done in every such case, simply because they *could not baptize such persons before they were taught.* Their rule is to baptize in infancy, and before teaching, and that they may baptize after they have been taught and believe, are merely exceptions to the regular pedobaptist order. This is obvious. Notwithstanding this, it is freely granted, that pedobaptists are in the habit of complaining that others get their subjects to the water too soon! But let every one be held responsible for his own consistency. Pedobaptists are the first people to the water!

It is difficult to see how they can find in the commission one order for an infant, and another different one for an adult. For who can not see, that to whom any part of the commission applies, it all applies; and that the order in which it applies to one is the order in which it applies to all? The Lord makes no such distinctions and variations as appear in their practice. But now we are ready for the most important question of all, and the one that bears directly upon the subject of this discourse. Is any one of these

orders correct—and if so, which one? Here we have a question of order to which there are three parties claiming respectively as follows:

I. *Pedobaptists:* (1) Baptism, (2) teaching, (3) repentance, (4) faith, and (5) pardon.

II. *Baptists:* (1) Teaching, (2) repentance, (3) faith, (4) pardon, and (5) baptism.

III. *Christian:* (1) Teaching, (2) faith, (3) repentance, (4) baptism, and (5) pardon.

To whom shall we refer this question? To father Wesley? We are not agreed. To Dr. D. R. Campbell? Still we are not agreed. To A. Campbell? No! no! Then, to whom shall we refer it? It is proposed that it shall be decided by the Spirit of God—the Spirit of unerring wisdom. Who objects? Surely none can.

Immediately following Luke's record of the commission we have this promise and instruction given by our Lord to his disciples:

"And behold I send the promise of my Father upon you; but tarry ye in the city of Jerusalem till ye be endued with power from on high."

And in another place he promises them the Spirit in these words:

"But the Comforter, the Holy Ghost, whom the Father will send in my name, he shall teach you all things, and bring all things to your remembrance, whatsoever I have said unto you."

From these scriptures, and others that might be cited here, it appears that the apostles, before entering upon the work assigned them in this commission, were to tarry in the city of Jervsalem till they received the Holy Spirit; and that by it they were to be guided into all the truth. We learn also from Acts, first and second chapters, that they did go, as instructed, to Jerusalem, and there awaited the coming of the Spirit; that the Spirit came as promised by

the Saviour: "And they were all filled with the Holy Spirit, and began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance." There and then they began the work assigned them in the commission, guided by the Spirit of God into all the truth. Then, and ever afterward, when proclaiming the Gospel, they were directed by the Spirit that never errs. It is proposed, then, that we take our stand here and see the *order* of the commission set forth infallibly right. For whatever order is set forth here manifestly bears the divine sanction, for it is the work of the Spirit of the living God.

After explaining the miraculous phenomena of the occasion, for these attracted the attention of the people, the apostle Peter preached the Gospel to the multitude; or, in other words, *taught* the people concerning Jesus. After a profound and convincing argument, he concluded: "Therefore let all the house of Israel know assuredly, that God hath made that same Jesus, whom ye have crucified, both Lord and Christ."

Evidently the thing first in order here is *teaching*. This can not be disputed. And we are informed, that when the people "heard this they were pierced in the heart, and said unto Peter and the rest of the apostles, Men and brethren, what shall we do?" Here we have, in the second place, unmistakable evidence of *faith*. When these persons are "pierced in the heart" with what they had before supposed to be false, and call on the apostles, whose mouths they had before stopped, to know *what they must do*, do they not *believe?* It would be too great a compromise of common sense to argue such a question. The question now to be answered by the direction of the Holy Spirit is, what must such persons do? persons who have been *taught* concerning Christ, and who *believe*. Hear the answer: "Repent [this settles the order of faith and repentance, for here *believers* are told to repent], and be

ized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for remission of sins." Here, then, we have all the items ained in the commission set forth in the following or- : (1) Teaching, (2) faith, (3) repentance, (4) baptism, remission of sins. This settles the question of *order*. e we find the *place* in the divine arrangement, and con- ently the conditions of pardon. A man must be *ht*, he must *believe*, *repent*, and be *baptized*, and there omes to pardon, as it stands in the Gospel plan.

his order of the great commission is not so fully and rly set forth in any subsequent case of salvation that rred under apostolic preaching; nor was it necessary it should be. Yet not a single instance in which a on came to pardon in any different way, can be shown he entire history of the preaching of the apostles. re are cases, it is true, where persons came to pardon, hich all these items are not named in their order, but r are clearly understood. With the case we have ex- ned, which was the *beginning* of the work, fully before minds, we will readily see the same simple order ughout the entire Acts of the Apostles. Nor is there thing contrary to this, as has been claimed, in any of apostolic epistles. On the contrary, it is there cor- rated. It is true, that, as against this order, such ages as predicate our justification, or salvation, of , or of grace, or of something else without naming all conditions, are often cited. But for the power of udice over the mind on which it has hold, this objec- need not be noticed; but on that account, a brief e is deemed necessary. It is not held, that we are d *by* the conditions before set forth—nor *on* those ditions—independently of the grace of God, the blood Christ, the resurrection of Christ, or the work of the y Spirit. We are saved by the grace of God, by the d of Jesus, by the resurrection of Christ, by the Spirit

of God, *and yet* we must be *taught*, must *believe*, *repent*, and be *baptized* for the remission of sins. But for the grace of God, Jesus would never have died for sinners; but for his death there would have been no Gospel; but for the Spirit of God, the Gospel would never have been preached to men; but for the preaching of the Gospel, men would never have been *taught*, could not have *believed*, would not have *repented* and been *baptized;* and, consequently, there would have been none saved. When, therefore, the Scriptures predicate our salvation of grace, it is right; and so of the blood of Christ, of the Spirit of God, of the name of Jesus Christ, of knowledge, of faith, of repentance and of baptism. When grace is the subject of which the *inspired* writer treats, he predicates our justification of it, without there naming any other cause or condition. So of the blood of Christ. So of faith. So of any cause or condition of our salvation.

The passage, "Therefore being justified by faith," only teaches that we are *justified by faith.* That's all. The language does not exclude the grace of God, the blood of Christ, repentance or baptism—in one word, *it excludes nothing.*

Again; the expression "Baptism doth also now save us," only predicates our salvation of baptism—not of baptism *alone*—because the apostle is there *speaking of baptism.* It is submitted, therefore, as a rule, *That where in the Scriptures our salvation is predicated of a named cause or condition, every other cause and condition named elsewhere in the Scriptures must be understood.* Otherwise, the Scriptures will be made self-contradictory.

Perhaps the only objection that will ever be raised to this discourse, will be, that it makes baptism a condition going before pardon. True it does, and simply because the word of God does. And so have taught the most eminent men in all the denominations that now denounce

the doctrine as terribly heretical. It may not be out of place, therefore, to conclude this discourse with a few quotations from some of those eminent men :—

1. JOHN WESLEY: "It is true, the second Adam has found a remedy for the disease which came upon all by the offense of the first. But the benefit of this is to be received through the means which he hath appointed; through baptism in particular, which is the ordinary means he hath appointed for that purpose; and to which God hath tied us, though he may not have tied himself." *Treatise on Baptism, Doctrinal Tracts, p.* 251. This doc-doctrine was published for several years, and up to 1864, by the General Conference of the Methodist E. Church. True, in 1864, the Conference laid this treatise by Mr. Wesley, aside, substituting therefor one by a committee appointed by Conference for the special purpose of revising Methodist doctrine on that subject—in which New Tract we have as follows :—

2. "Baptism, therefore, is a sacred rite, without which no man can be initiated into the visible church of Christ. See Rom. iv, 11, etc., where baptism is clearly connected with the promise of God respecting our salvation. And also Mark xvi, 16, where the promise of salvation is secured to the baptized believer, namely, 'He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved.'" Pp. 244–5.

In Richard Watson's Theological Institutes—a book that the Methodist Discipline recommends him who would be a Methodist preacher, to study *four years*—we have this language—after some extended and sensible remarks on 1 Peter iii, 21 :—

3. "It is thus that we see how St. Peter preserves the correspondence between the act of Noah in preparing the ark as an act of faith by which he was justified, and the act of submitting to Christian baptism, which is also ob-

viously an act of faith, *in order to the remission of sins*, or the obtaining a good conscience before God." P. 630.

This language is as strong as it can be, and so plain that all can understand it without difficulty.

Next we will hear Dr. Gale, than whom we have no superior scholar or writer among the Baptists. In his *Reflections* on *Wall's History of Infant Baptism*," Letter 2nd, p. 83, we have as follows :—

4. "Baptism, I grant, is of great necessity; and though I dare fix no limits to the infinite goodness and mercy of God, which I am confident he will give mighty proofs of, in great instances of kindness toward all sincere, though mistaken men; however, the Gospel rule is, according to the doctrine of the apostle, *to repent and be baptized for the remission of sins*. We should be very cautious, therefore, of making any change in these things, lest we deprive ourselves, through our presumption, of that title to pardon without which there is no salvation."

The concluding *caution* of this eminent Baptist, is most affectionately urged upon his brethren, who, of late, it seems, for the sake of being orthodox, as well as the Pedobaptists, have agreed with them to call baptism a *non-essential*.

May God help all who strive for the truth! Amen.

SERMON VIII.

CHURCH EDIFICATION.

BY GEORGE CAMPBELL.

"According to the effectual working in the measure of every part, maketh increase of the body, unto the edifying of itself in love."—EPH. iv, 16.

THE church is the school of Christ—his house of learning, and a "heavenly place" of social worship. In this point of view, we will contemplate it as an organized body or society, and consider the duties of its various members.

As a school, it has its stated times of orderly assembling; and its worship is eminently social in its character. It is also arranged by its glorious Head, with every needed means and facility for self-edification in Christ's pure love. In him are hid "all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge." The gospel, in its first teaching, commanded in the great commission, wherein Christ said to the apostles, "Go teach all nations" [*Matheteusate*, Gr.], was all addressed to the world, or those without, to induce sinners to repent and turn, and come to Christ's school, and learn of him who is meek and lowly in heart. This primary teaching shows how to become disciples, or learners in Christ's school. But the second teaching [*didaskentes*] embraces the Christian doctrine, or great science of Divinity in its amplitude and perfection—"all things," that the great Teacher has enjoined upon disciples to teach, and to learn. This is "the apostle's doctrine," in which the ancient Christians continued steadfast, as also "in the fellowship, the breaking of bread, and the prayers." Herein are contained "the words of good doctrine, whereunto" Paul said Timothy "had attained." (1 Tim. iv, 6.)

Now the church overseers or bishops, to whom is in-

trusted the work of properly teaching and training the members of the church, are responsible for the proper inculcation of this doctrine, "form of sound words." In this great work, are not many of our overseers and Christian teachers very remiss? What would you think of a school teacher, who would call his school together, now and then, at very long intervals, without minding whether many or few of his pupils attended his call, and then should read a short lesson from the only school book kept in the school room, and follow this with a dry lecture of an hour or more, and then dismiss his class or classes, without asking a single question of one of the pupils; but would simply give them notice that the next week or month he would read to those who might attend another lesson, and give them another lecture, or repeat the same over! I would say to such a school teacher, "you had better quit or reform *instanter*."

But such is just the course of teaching in many of our churches! Some of them have not a Bible-class, nor even a Sunday school! These churches do not learn well, and many of the young disciples fall away and are lost. No wonder. No learners ever did learn well in such a school. But instead of this, every young disciple should have a copy of the scriptures—Christ's school-book—as his *vade mecum*, and should have a weekly lesson assigned him for a Bible-class; and should be looked after, if he failed to assemble with his class at the stated time, and exhorted to the performance of his duty. The Bible class should meet on every Lord's day if practicable.

It is very evident that a Christian congregation, composed as it is of disciples, should really and practically be a school of learning, where all the facilities for study, in order to obtain a thorough Christian education, are enjoyed. They should not meet on the Lord's day, simply to be lectured, as is often the case in some churches; but

they should come together at least once per week, book in hand, to recite and be examined by proper teachers in a good lesson in "the oracles of God." The custom of some Scotch Baptists, and reformed churches, to have every member bring a copy of the scriptures with him to meeting, is good and proper. Then let the disciples meet, having the lesson well studied during the previous week, and be expected to show at church, that they have been daily students of the holy oracles, and faithful learners in the school of Christ.

In some churches we have too much preaching, and too little practical learning. In others, not enough of either teaching or learning. The church is a living active body, and the great instrumentality or agency used by our glorious Head, for the extension of his religion and reign; and there should be "an effectual working in the measure of every part," or by every member, "to the edifying of itself in love." But is this the case in the prevailing method of church edification among us? Do all the members work as required? Do the church overseers give them all opportunity to work as they ought? Are the Lord's day duties faithfully performed? Is a daily study of the scriptures religiously enjoined? Are we good disciples in our present mode of learning? Are we giving all diligence to make the proper additions of Christian knowledge? And are we faithfully reducing our Master's holy lessons to practice in our lives?

We find that all the members of the church are required by the apostolic teaching to be very diligent. They are required to "give all diligence" to these great matters. To speak of *lazy* Christians, is a solecism—a *linguistic absurdity!* Idleness is a sin, and the parent of many vices. Young members, however, are not generally idlers in every sense. They most generally will be doing something; and if not properly employed, will be doing wrong. As

children being unemployed, go into mischief. some of our modern scribes have much trouble and disputation concerning social parties among the young folks for dancing and other amusements. My experience and observation have taught me that the best plan to keep the young disciples from such social gatherings and vain amusements, is to institute and keep up in the churches frequent meetings for social worship; such as Bible classes, Sunday schools and prayer meetings; and have them so conducted that all the young members shall have something interesting and edifying to do in them. They will then learn to enjoy the superior charms of Christian society, and godly sociality, and be thus led to a diligent working in the measure of every part of the body—the church, "for the edifying of itself in love." Young disciples love the social meetings, if they *are social.*

2. The disciples are all required to add to their faith *courage*—religious courage, as is evidently enjoined by the original word *arete* in 2 Peter i, 5. And in no way is this Christian grace more distinctly attained and promoted than by the disciples frequently assembling for social worship and improvement, as commanded above. By frequently engaging in the duties and exercises of these meetings, we easily learn that kind of "boldness in the faith in Christ Jesus," which the Word of God approves. It is in the midst of the service and the excitement of the conflict that the good soldier becomes fearless, hopeful, and confident of victory.

3. Christian courage requires the keeping of a good conscience. The exercises of a good soldier of the cross are those daily practiced by that great moral hero, the apostle Paul, who said, "And herein do I exercise myself, to have always a conscience void of offense toward God and toward man." Acts xxiv, 16. This is energy—true "*arete.*" Now, when churches or members habitually

neglect the assembling of themselves together for social church-edification and improvement, they sinfully neglect, at least, these seven duties laid down in the "good Word of God:" 1. Social prayer. 2. Hymning praise. 3. Gaining knowledge of the Word. 4. Admonishing one another. 5. Exhorting one another. 6. Speaking often one to another. 7. Stirring one another up "to love and good works," and "obeying those who have the rule over us." These are all congregational duties, mutually binding upon the disciples. See Heb. x, 23, 24; Col. iii, 16; Acts ii, 42; Acts xii, 5–12; Acts xvi, 16; Malachi iii, 16; Heb. x, 25; Eph. v, 19, *et al.* Can these duties be neglected with impunity? Will a church be well built up, while important commandments are entirely neglected? Take, for example, the duty of *social prayer* or of *mutual exhortation.* A church entirely negligent of either or both of these requirements, will certainly fail in an important, most useful, and vital particular, essential to its upbuilding and growth. But what I wish to impress on the minds of all the beloved brethren is this; that the keeping of a good conscience toward God, most assuredly requires the faithful observance of these congregational duties.

Brother, ask thyself the serious question: Am I faithful to Christ while I neglect to attend the social meetings of the church for mutual prayer and exhortation? or while I refuse to participate in these social exercises? Has not the Great Head of the church enjoined upon me, as a duty, thus to pray and exhort, as well as upon the other brethren? Is the blessing of the Lord for those who will not keep the commandments, only in part? Do you, my brother, add to your faith true Christian courage? Are you bold in the faith which is in Christ Jesus, while you do not open your mouth in the social devotional exercises of his church? The Lord has not commanded the preacher to do all the praying, exhorting, admonishing, and inciting

of the church to love and good works. No, indeed, the preachers are chiefly to do these things for those who are without; but within the body, the members are required to do these duties among themselves. And the brave soldier will be found ever at the post of duty. In no way can this required courage be better cultivated and encouraged, than by habitual attendance upon the duties of the social meetings.

4. But as members, we are required "to add to our faith, knowledge"—"to grow in grace and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour, Jesus Christ." Can this be done as well without a regular system of instruction in the church? To this end are not Bible classes and social meetings not only expedient, but obligatory? It seems evident to me, that the promotion of Christian knowledge, as duty requires, demands that the church shall have more of the character and features of a school, than is commonly the case among us as reformers. Would it not be well for us to have a library in every church, with a good supply of cheap Bibles, Testaments, dictionaries, ancient and modern geographies, charts, and maps, etc., and for the church to spend an hour or more each Lord's day as a regular church school, with children and youth all together, as a society, to promote Christian knowledge? With well-qualified superintendents, such Sunday schools would accomplish wonders for the good of the church and of society in general.

5. The church must bring out and raise up young preachers, and send them forth. Would not such a church Sunday school, in connection with the weekly social prayer meeting, greatly aid in discovering and bringing out these laborers? How many preachers did you ever know to take their early start in churches where they had no regular Bible class or prayer meeting? I have looked round and examined the history of our churches in Eastern Indi-

ana, especially to learn whence come our preachers; and I find that a few churches have produced nearly all the young preachers that have started among us. And I have looked in vain to find *one* young preacher who has started with those churches that have habitually neglected social meetings and Sunday schools. I can name two churches, from each of which have gone out about ten preachers; and both have been greatly blessed, and have been great blessings to others, by faithfully keeping up Bible classes, Sunday schools, and social meetings. Such I find to be the evidence of *facts*, "which are stubborn things." Let us, then, make our churches really congregations of *disciples;* yea, good disciples or learners in the school of the great Teacher.

6. But we are also required to add to our faith, godliness, or piety. This can not well be done in the church, without the prayer meeting, aided by all the concomitants of pure worship, and the faithful study of the oracles of God. This is too evident to need illustration, or amplification. *We must be "steadfast in the apostle's doctrine, the fellowship, the breaking of bread, and in the prayers."* (Acts ii, 42). And we must "*let the word of Christ dwell in us richly in all wisdom, teaching and admonishing one another in psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs*, singing, with grace in our hearts to the Lord." (Col. iii, 16).

7. Furthermore, we are required to add to faith, "brotherly love." These social meetings, and church schools are, we think, the very best possible promoters of this heavenly grace. We must have fervent love among ourselves; and our frequent coming together, and engaging together, in these social exercises, we know from experience, and observation, have the happiest effect, in bringing us into sympathy with each other, and making us feel like a family of brothers and sisters, bound together by the closest and strongest ties of kindred affection, and

purest love. How can we make it a matter of principle, and binding obligation, to be frequently together, talking together, and studying together "the good word of God," and praying together, singing together, in the name of Christ our common Lord, and together constantly engaged in the united work of faith, and labor of love, in the patience of hope, without being stimulated to love each other fervently? and, without feeling that we have all the same interests, prospects, and eternal and glorious home full in view?

I could tell of a large church, once torn down by intestine broils, wranglings and strifes, till it entirely ceased to hold its Lord's day meetings; but through the influence of two good faithful brethren, aided by a preacher in whom they all retained full confidence, it was resuscitated, and not only restored to the enjoyment of brotherly love, but within two years from the restoration, it received an increase of nearly two hundred members. To gain this great good, nothing contributed more than the prayer meetings, Bible classes, and Sunday school, together with their united missionary efforts, in which good works, in fellowship engaged, they seemed to forget, not only their wrangles and alienations, but the causes of them. Similar results, from the same causes, I have also known in a number of other churches. The best home of love and union, and most influential theological seminary, is a well regulated, living, acting, united church, in which there is "an effectual working in the measure of every part, to the edifying of itself in love." I do not wish to be understood, as in any way undervaluing other schools and institutions of learning, to prepare young men for the Christian ministry. But I insist, that good churches, which properly improve the means and facilities the great Head has given his people, are the best seminaries.

With the present progress and practice of the churches

among us, I find that we want the higher theological seminary, to prepare our preachers. But a true working church, properly constituted and regulated, and actively using its means of "edifying itself in love," will become such a higher seminary. Suppose now, that all the protestant churches in some of our large towns or cities, for instance, say Indianapolis, should take it into their heads and hearts, to have and practice true Christian union; and as John Wesley prayed, "should forget their party names and unscriptural phrases and forms that have divided the Christian world, and should agree to sit down all together at the feet of our common Master, Jesus, to hear his word, to imbibe his Spirit, and transcribe his life in their own," and should then organize a true church in Indianapolis—*a living united body*—in which there would be found "an effectual working in the measure of every part, to the edifying of itself in love," as anciently, at Antioch; could not such a church as this would then be, nay, *would* it not constitute and put into operation a blessed and glorious theological school, from which many gospel preachers would be sent forth to evangelize the world, to build up other churches, and theological institutions, and to spread far and wide the triumphs of the Redeemer's love, power, and salvation? O! for such a church, and for such glorious results!

One of the main objections, made by the pious of the different denominations, is about this: That while we constantly urge that there should be no classifying of the commandments, into *essentials* and *non-essentials*, but that we should regard all of God's commands as *essential*, and many of us, complain loudly of the sects, because they pay too little respect to the positive ordinances of baptism and the Lord's supper; at the same time, we often neglect the public ordinances of prayer and praise, and exhortation in social meetings. And these, they think, are just as essen-

tial as baptism and the weekly communion. Now is there not some force in the objection? Does it come with a good grace from a preacher, who neglects family prayer, and prayer meetings, and other things of this class, to be continually hammering the sects, for their infant rantism, and rigid sectarianism? Until such preachers reform themselves, essentially, they never will convert the sects, nor promote Christian union. There are some churches, within my knowledge, and preachers too, that are a divine and spiritual power in their respective religious communities. And, on the other hand, there are some others who exert no power at all, in favor of the cause of God. They are a dead weight, and a religious excrescence, where amputation would be useful. Our efficiency as brethren, and as churches, in the good work to which we are called, is in the exact ratio with our purity and piety. Now, I reason in this way, that if we would effectually promote Christian union and communion, our churches should be careful not to neglect their social prayer meetings. But our elders should endeavor to have all the church members habitually interested in them, from week to week.

8. But there is another commandment that is almost entirely disregarded by many of our church members, which in the good Word, reads thus: "Obey them that have the rule over you, and submit yourselves." (Heb. xiii, 17). Again, "acknowledge and esteem them very highly in love, for their work sake." (1 Thess. v, 13). Now these social prayer meetings are among the things that overseers of churches are authorized by our king, to enjoin upon the members. It is their duty to appoint such meetings, and require the prompt attendance of the disciples. But many members will not attend them; in fact, they so disregard their elders, and so lightly esteem their *rules*, that they seldom even attend any meeting, when the elders are expected to teach! They only design to attend meet-

ing when some acceptable preacher, to them of some note, is to be present and give them an oration. The stated Lord's day meetings do not find them present, without the preacher is to be there.

Such Christians say, on Lord's day morning: "I shall not go to meeting to-day; nobody will be there to speak, but old Father B., or old Pap L., or Eld. P., and there is such a sameness in their prayers, speeches and exhortations that I am tired of hearing them; I can learn more by reading my Bible at home than by listening to such men. I wish we could yet some talented man to preach regularly for us; it is so dry to have to listen to our elders." And so they remain at home, and lounge, and sleep, neglect to read the Bible; and as for social prayer meeting, they never think of obeying the elders with respect to that! No, indeed, they think they may do just as they please, or as they *feel*, about attending such meetings!

Now, will you, my beloved brother, or sister, allow an old preacher, of much experience, and who has thought much and intensely on this subject, to say to you, that in this disrespect to your elders and their authority, you, to the same extent, show disrespect and contempt for the authority of the great Head of the church, by whose word, which you herein disobey, he will judge us all at the last day. Are we, in these things, simply to please ourselves, and our own will? or shall we seek to please the Lord, and do his will? "They that do the will of the Lord shall abide forever." "Not every one," said Jesus, "that saith unto me Lord! Lord! shall enter into the kingdom of heaven, but *he that doeth the will* of my Father who is in heaven." Think of this, and prepare to meet thy God!

"Of the things of which we have spoken this is the sum." We have a Great High Priest, and Head of the church—Jesus Christ; who is Head over all things to the church, which is his body, the fullness of him who filleth all in all.

Disciples constitute this divine living body. "We are members of Christ, and members one of another." "Members in particular." As a living body, there was designed to be in this organization, an active *working* in the measure of every part, or number, for its own edification in divine love. To this end, all should be learners—all should be workers, and all have something appointed for them to do. In order to be built up, the members must do just as commanded by the Head, the Great Law-giver; and not select certain commands, as *essentials*, and count others as *non-essentials*. The commands of God are all *essential*, and given to be obeyed, for church edification. None can be neglected with impunity. Among these, the duties pertaining to piety, and brotherly kindness, are most important. To this class of duties, pertain those performed in the assemblies of the saints, for social worship, converse, teaching, and exhortation. Very great disrespect is shown to brethren, to the overseers, and to the Great Ruler over all, by those members who habitually "neglect the assembling of themselves together as the manner of some is." And by so doing, they, at least, break these seven requirements: 1. The command to consider one another, to stir each other up to love, and to good works. 2. To "speak often one to another." 3. "To exhort one another." 4. "To pray with, and for one another." 5. To let the word of Christ dwell in us *richly*, in all wisdom, "teaching and admonishing one another in psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs." 6. "To grow in grace, and in the knowledge of the truth." And 7. To obey the rulers of the church, the elders, or overseers, "who watch for our souls, as they must give account to God."

To neglect these practical and *essential* duties, not only makes us very sinful, but dwarfs our Christian characters, and renders us inefficient in our Master's cause, in uniting

the saints, and converting sinners. Are not these things so?

I might go on to note further cases of failures in churches, and give more extended illustrations, but I forbear. And now, dear brethren, suffer the word of exhortation, from an old pioneer and fellow-pilgrim, who desires, above all things, to see the church arise and shine, and fill the world with the divine light and glory of the Lord; and,

1. To my brethren, holding the episcopal office in the church, I intreat you, as you are to rule well, and watch for the souls of those under your charge, suffer not your congregations to neglect their regular and stated meetings. Call them to prayer, and to those duties so necessary to church edification. You are stewards over the house of the Lord; and stewards must be faithful. You are watchmen upon the walls of Zion; and they that watch, must give an account. Be faithful; do not, in your social meetings, do all the exhorting, teaching, praying, reading and admonishing, *yourselves*. But oversee the members, young and old, and call them into the work. Expect each and all to do their duty, and take some part. For edification, "let there be an effectual working in the measure of every part," of the church; and the growth of the church will be healthy, and symmetrical, and pleasing to our great Head. And Christ's light will shine! Finally, brethren, one and all; we shall all meet at the "judgment-seat of Christ." We shall receive there, according to what we have *done*, and not according to our *professions* or *pretensions*. Let us then, as preachers and teachers, "DECLARE THE WHOLE COUNSEL OF GOD," and war a good warfare. As elders, let us not fail to take care of the house of God, and show the younger members, both by precept and example, how to be true and faithful disciples, and good soldiers under the Captain of our salvation, our

great Leader and Commander. Let us be true to ourselves, and to our glorious King.

To the young disciples, under the great Teacher, I would say, while you are young men and young women, learn to become habitual in the discharge of every duty, at home and abroad. And ever remember that "the path of duty, is the only path of safety, and the only way to peace, and the only road to heaven and eternal glory."

The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Spirit, be with you all. AMEN.

SERMON IX.

CHRISTIAN UNION.

BY J. M. MATHES.

"Neither pray I for these alone, but for them also which shall believe on me through their word; that they all may be one; as thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee, that they also may be one in us: that the world may believe that thou hast sent me."—JOHN XVII, 20, 21.

IN the discussion of this important subject we propose to inquire:

1. What is Christian union, as taught in the text, and what is it not?

II. Is Christian union possible and practicable?

III. Upon what foundation or platform can such union be consummated?

IV. Under what name can all Christians be brought into harmonious co-operation and union?

V. What would be the result of such union of all Christians upon themselves and upon the world?

All subjects connected with the conversion of the world, the development and perfection of Christian character, are important in every respect; but none of these great themes are more interesting than the one we have chosen as the theme for the present discourse. In looking over the map of Christendom at the present day, what a sad picture everywhere meets the eye of the Christian philosopher! Those claiming to be the followers of the Prince of Peace, are all divided and cut up into sects and parties; each sect having its peculiar creed and party name, and each filled with prejudice and hatred against all the other parties.

This, as all know, was not the condition of things in the beginning of Christianity. Then they were of "one heart and of one soul," and were recognized even by their enemies as a unit. They were everywhere known by the same divine name, "CHRISTIAN." It is true that the indications of the spirit of schism were visible in the church at Corinth; but the apostle heard of it, while he was preaching in the city of Ephesus, and he "partly believed it." He wrote them a kind but severe letter, promptly rebuking them for their carnality, and urging them to unity and peace.

In the present state of the religious world many good and pious men are discouraged. They see the evil of division, and deeply deplore it; but they see no way out of the difficulty. They accept division as an accomplished fact, a sort of *moral necessity*, growing out of perverted human nature and its present surroundings, and perhaps from the very genius of Christianity itself. Such persons, while they mourn the evils of division, content themselves with the notion that all will ultimately be well. "We can not all see, think, and believe alike in the present world; but beyond the present life we shall be one in heaven. All our denominational pride and ambition, all our sectarian prejudice, all our hatred and party strifes, all our discord, and the bitterness of our party spirit," say they, "will be left in the grave, and forgotten in the moment of the glorious resurrection from the dead; and in the house not made with hands we shall all be one indeed, and not a discordant note will be heard in all the mighty throng of the redeemed."

Others, again, manifest such an utter ignorance of the doctrine of the Lord, and the genius of the Christian institution, that they glory in division, and regard it as a good thing. They seem to regard division among professed Christians as absolutely necessary, in order to develop all

the religious elements of society. "If we were all one," say they, "a great many persons would live and die out of the church, because they could not see or believe with them; but as the matter now stands, all can be accommodated. Every one can find a party with whom he can conscientiously unite, and a creed that he can honestly embrace; and thus all can be suited, and all can be in some way religious."

In view of all these strange theories and notions, that now prevail over the world, upon the subject of Christian union, the importance of a clear and scriptural discussion of the subject must, we think, be apparent to all. We shall, then, proceed to develop the subject to the very best of our ability; and we pray God to enable us so to present the truth, that it may be understood and appreciated by all, and may sink deep into every heart, and bring forth fruit to the glory of his great name!

I. In the discussion of the first item in our arrangement we shall first show what Christian union IS NOT. We inquire, then, is the Christian world at the present time united according to the prayer of Jesus? We have a class of preachers all over the land who take the affirmative of this question. And leaving out of view those denominations whom they regard as "heterodox," such as Universalists, Unitarians, Mormons, Shakers, Campbellites, and perhaps Catholics, they tell us that all the "orthodox sects," or "evangelical denominations," are now enjoying the union for which Jesus prayed; and that taking all such "evangelical sects" together, they do really constitute the one body of Christ, and are one, as the Saviour prayed!

But let us examine this bold assumption in the light of truth, and see what it amounts to. We affirm that such *is not* Christian union! It is not union of any kind, but the outcropping of the spirit of insubordination to the law of God: it is carnality—heresy! The union for which

This, as all know, was not the condition of things in the beginning of Christianity. Then they were of "one heart and of one soul," and were recognized even by their enemies as a unit. They were everywhere known by the same divine name, "CHRISTIAN." It is true that the indications of the spirit of schism were visible in the church at Corinth; but the apostle heard of it, while he was preaching in the city of Ephesus, and he "partly believed it." He wrote them a kind but severe letter, promptly rebuking them for their carnality, and urging them to unity and peace.

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Jesus prayed, was a *visible* union, because it was to be a means of converting the world. "*That the world may believe that thou hast sent me.*" But we ask the advocates of this new theory how they expect the present order of things, which they call union, to have any influence in converting the world to Christ? The world does not see the union—no one will contend that the world can see any thing like union among the warring sects of the present and past ages. Indeed, so far as the world can see, even the self-styled "evangelical sects," are sadly divided, and in great confusion with no love for each other. But, on the contrary, they see, or think they see, abundant evidence of carnality, hatred, malice, envy, strife, emulation, wrath, discord, swellings, tumults, and every evil work. Instead of being converted by any thing like union, which they can behold among them; they are hardened in a more stubborn state of unbelief, by evidences of the want of union and love, which they everywhere behold.

But does the church of God consist of a group of authodox sects, considered as branches? This is a popular delusion, and entertained by many very well-meaning people. We take the negative of this, and call upon those who affirm to bring forward the proof. But this they do not, and can not do; simply because there is none to bring, and the assumption is false! We recollect of but one scripture that speaks of "branches" in connection with the church of God, and this reads as follows:

"I am the true vine, and my Father is the husbandman. Every branch in me that beareth not fruit, he taketh away: and every branch that beareth fruit, he purgeth it, that it may bring forth more fruit. Now ye are clean through the word which I have spoken unto you. Abide in me, and I in you. As the branch can not bear fruit of itself, except it abide in the vine; no more can ye, except ye

abide in me. I am the vine, ye are the branches." John xv, 1–5.

We need not spend time in showing that this text furnishes no sort of countenance to the assumption. Is Jesus here talking to the orthodox sects, as such, when he says, "Ye are the BRANCHES?" No one, we suppose, will affirm it. The Christian dispensation had not then been opened—the kingdom of heaven, or church of God, had not yet been set up in the world; and consequently, there were no Christian denominations, orthodox or heterodox, then in existence, nor for centuries afterward. It must therefore be plain to every unprejudiced mind, that the Saviour was here addressing his immediate disciples who were standing around him. And when he said "ye are the BRANCHES," he spoke to them as individual disciples. Then, according to the teaching of our Lord, each individual disciple of Christ, who is "clean through the word spoken to him" by the master, is a *branch* in the true vine. He does not *belong* to a branch, but is himself a *branch!* Not a branch of some sect, but a branch in Christ as the true vine. And as Christ is the Head of the church, and the church is his body, so all who are members of his body, the church, are branches in him.

But we wish for a moment to look at the absurdity of the thing. The assumption is, that the Church of God, as a great whole, is made up of all its parts, and that these parts are the "evangelical sects," such as Presbyterians, Baptists, Methodists, Lutherans, Congregationalists, Episcopalians, *et cetera*. But if this be so, then there could have been no such institution as the Church of God during the first sixteen hundred years of the Christian era! Because the church, as a whole, could not exist without its parts, and these several parts of which it is composed according to the assumption, had no existence till the sixteenth century. The Lutheran sect, is the oldest of the

lot, and it had no existence till the times of Martin Luther. And the church must have been very imperfect, even in the times of Wesley, as most of those institutions called "orthodox sects," have sprung up within the last two hundred years! If the Methodist Episcopal Church is a branch of the true church, for example, and as such a constituent part of it, then the church was imperfect and deficient, until this part was called into existence and added to it! And who can tell whether the church has yet arrived at a perfect organization! May we not reasonably expect that other sects now in embryo, or under the ban of "heterodoxy," will rise to importance, become popular, be declared "evangelical," and added to the orthodox branches as a part of the church? How absurd in view of what the scriptures teach concerning the perfection of the body of Christ! But we can not pursue this matter further at present; and, indeed, we suppose it is not necessary.

But under our first head, we inquire, in the second place, what is "Christian union" according to the prayer of Jesus? We answer: It is a visible union in a visible organism, called in the New Testament, "the body of Christ"—"the Church of God," *et cetera.*

To prove this, let us turn back and read the prayer of the divine Jesus again. "That they all may be one, as thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee, that they also may be one in us; that the world may believe that thou hast sent me." In this petition the Lord first prayed for himself; secondly, for the apostles as his witnesses, that in giving their testimony concerning him, they might all be one, that the world might believe; and, thirdly, for "all who shall believe on me through their word" (the apostle's testimony concerning Christ). The oneness of the apostolic testimony was exceedingly important. For instance, if Peter had declared that Jesus rose from the dead on the third day, and ascended up to heaven on the next day;

and James had proclaimed that he rose on the fourth day, and ascended up to heaven on the tenth day; and John had declared that he rose on the third day, and remained with them, teaching there for the space of forty days; and the other witnesses had made still other and different statements concerning these great matters; all know that such a disagreement among the witnesses would have destroyed their testimony. But there was no disagreement among them as regards the great facts. They were *one*, as the Saviour prayed that they might be. It is true, that each witness tells the story in his own way, and some of them more fully than others. Some of them mention circumstances and incidents which the others omit, but still there is no contradiction in their statements. In all the great facts they are one; and these seeming little discrepancies, so far from weakening, only go to strengthen the testimony, as it proves that they were not in collusion to deceive the people.

But the third part of this petition embraces all, in all coming ages, "who shall believe on me through their word." The word of the apostles is simply their preaching—the gospel of Christ. He gave them the gospel in charge, and commanded them to go into all the world and preach it to every creature, beginning at Jerusalem. And we may remark, in passing, that if any one has ever believed through the influence of a dream, or by hearing even the voice of an angel, without the word preached by the apostles, then is he not embraced in this prayer of the divine Lord. But all who hear and believe the gospel as preached by the apostles on the day of Pentecost, and subsequently, and obey the gospel, come into the one body, and are one in him—one in spirit, mind and disposition. They have the one faith, have confessed the one Lord, have submitted to the one immersion, received the one spirit of adoption, in the one body, under the one

God and Father of all, who is over all, and through all, and in all. And this union is a visible union, and by it the world is to be convinced that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of the living God.

But perhaps we may be met with an objection at this point. "If," says the objector, "the body of Christ, or church is a unit, and a visible organism, then you unchristianize all the sects, parties and denominations, and declare them wrong; or at least, that only one of all the six hundred can be right! This is uncharitable!" We say to the objector, this is *your* difficulty, not ours. We are aiming to develop Christian union, as taught by Christ and his apostles, and if in the progress of our work, the little institutions of men thrust themselves in our way, and get damaged, it is no fault of ours; they must see to that. In all such cases we say with the apostles, "Let God be true, and every man a liar." Far better for all that we should "fall upon the stone and be broken," now, that we may be saved at last, than to persist in our folly, and have "stones fall on us, and grind us and our systems to powder," and we be lost forever!

But some one is ready to ask, which one of all the evangelical sects is right? We answer, none of them. We know of no evangelical sects! You might as well talk to us of evangelical heresy—evangelical witchcraft—evangelical idolatry—evangelical strife—or even evangelical drunkenness! Sectarianism is heresy, and Paul classes heresy with the works of the flesh, see Gal. v, 19–21. "Now the works of the flesh are manifest, which are these: adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lasciviousness, idolatry, witchcraft, hatred, variance, emulations, wrath, strife, seditions, heresies, envyings, murders, drunkenness, revelings, and such like." The terms *sect* and *heresy—heretic*, come from the same Greek word, as every scholar knows, and therefore mean the same thing. It follows

then, that you might with equal propriety, prefix the term *evangelical*, before any of the above items of the works of the flesh, as to place it before "*sect*," or heresy.

It does not follow from this, however, that every individual member of the different sectarian parties, or sects, is a sinner and a reprobate. No—far from it. God has a people in Babylon to whom he says, "Come out of her my people, that ye be not partakers of her sins, and that ye receive not of her plagues." Babylon is condemned as a harlot, and the mother of abominations, and yet God claims to have a people in her. No doubt there are a multitude of good and pious men and women in the different denominations; but it is the duty of all such to come into the one body of Christ, and be one.

But how shall we know the true church from a mere human sect? To determine this, we lay down the following plain and simple rule, that all can understand and apply. It is this: Take up the New Testament as the great constitutional law of the kingdom, and read it carefully, and we shall find the organization called the church of God, is there fully described, with its head, its laws, its membership, its faith and its practice, and its name. This, we may be sure, is the true church. And as Christ has but one church on earth, and it has no branches, except its individual members, it follows that other organizations called churches, which are not once named or referred to in the New Testament, are human institutions, however popular and influential they may be, or however pious and honest many of the membership may be. We speak of them *as organisms.*

Now, apply this rule to all the Catholic and Protestant sects, and we shall see how they will stand the test. None of them had any existence in the world, till long after the New Testament was written, and therefore the history and description of the Christian Church, organized

and built up by the apostles, has no application to any one of them *as such*. Their names, articles of faith, form of church government and practice have all been worked out in the laboratory of human wisdom and experience, and therefore not from heaven, but of men; not of God, but of the Fathers.

Now, take up the Acts of Apostles, and read carefully and prayerfully a history of the organization of the church on the day of Pentecost, and of its subsequent building up and development, and we shall find a description of the true church, its name, faith and practice; and now, if we can find a religious organization, that holds the same divine faith, wearing the same "worthy name," governed by the same divine code of laws, and practicing the same heavenly precepts of the gospel, as delivered to us in the beginning by the apostles of the Lamb, and holding forth the word of life to the world, exactly as it was held forth by the inspired apostles in the beginning; we may then safely conclude that we have found the Church of God. Such an organization is *right*, and can not be *wrong*. Make the examination, and we feel confident you will have no difficulty in finding the true church.

II. Is Christian union possible and practicable? We answer, it is possible. 1. Because Jesus prayed for it, and the apostles taught it, and exhorted the brethren to be united. For proof, see the following scriptures: "Now I beseech you, brethren, by the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that ye all speak the same thing, and that there be no divisions among you; but that ye be perfectly joined together in the same mind, and in the same judgment. 1 Cor. i, 10. "For we are laborers together with God; ye are God's husbandry, ye are God's building." 1 Cor. iii, 9. "And hath put all things under his feet, and given him to be Head over all things to the church, which is his body, the fullness of him that filleth all in all." Eph. i,

22, 23. "Unto him be glory in the church by Christ Jesus throughout all ages, world without end." Eph. iii, 21. Again, "There is one body, and one Spirit, even as ye are called in one hope of your calling, one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father of all, who is above all and through all, and in you all." Eph. iv, 4–6. "From whom the whole body fitly joined together and compacted, by that which every joint supplieth, according to the effectual working in the measure of every part, maketh increase of the body, unto the edifying of itself in love." Eph. iv, 16. "Fulfill ye my joy, that ye be like-minded, having the same love, being of one accord, of one mind." Philip. ii, 2. "But if I tarry long, that thou mayst know how thou oughtest to behave thyself in the house of God, which is the church of the living God, the pillar and ground of the truth." 1 Tim. iii, 15.

The above scriptures, in connection with hundreds of others of like import, clearly prove that the apostles regarded the perfect union of Christians in one visible organization, called the "body of Christ," or "Church of the living God," as possible and very desirable. But while many are perhaps ready to admit the *bare* possibility of the union of all Christians in the one body or church, yet they deny its *practicability*. They state the difficulty thus: "We are so much divided now, into sects and parties, each one having its own creed and peculiar name, that union upon any conceivable basis, of concession and compromise, is now impracticable." But we answer, there is nothing in the objection; because there is common ground, upon which all Christians may unite in one visible body, without sacrificing any thing that they regard as essential. This ground we shall point out presently, but first, I wish to answer the stale objection, that "we *can not all see alike.*" But why not all see alike? If by this is meant that men do not all entertain the same opinions

upon all religious subjects; we answer that such agreement in matters of opinion, is not necessary to union in the Church of God. Indeed, the apostles teach us to have no disputes about mere matters of opinion. Paul says, "Him that is weak in the faith receive ye, but not to doubtful disputations," that is, "Receive him into your fellowship, without regard to difference of opinion." Rom. xiv, 1.

From this it is plain, that however men may differ in mere matters of opinion, they may still be one in Christ, and members of his visible church. But we must not confound faith and opinion. We must be one in faith. But this is not difficult. The faith of the gospel consists in believing the gospel facts. The great facts are three in number: 1st, the death of Christ for our sins: 2nd, his burial, and 3rd, his resurrection from the dead on the third day. To prove these facts, God has given us the divine testimony. Now we either believe the facts, upon the evidence given, or we do not. And all who believe them at all, necessarily believe them alike, and are *one* in faith. And it is worthy of remark, that all denominations, while they may differ widely in speculative theology, and in matters of opinion generally, yet they believe the simple facts of the gospel. Hence the differences among them, great as they seem to be, and really are, are rather differences of *opinion*, than faith, and properly viewed, stand not in the way of Christian union. Difference of opinion must be tolerated, while we "maintain the unity of the faith."

2. But let us further show the practicability of union, by the faith and practice of the denominations themselves. They all admit the Bible to be the word of God, and that it is the only infallible rule of faith and practice. While the confession of faith and creed of the party contain all that is peculiar to such party, or that distinguishes it from

others. And for a sect to give up its confession of faith, creed, or book of discipline, would be virtually to surrender its organization as a sect, and fall back upon the common platform of the Bible. And if all would consent to give up their human isms that now divide them, we should come together in happy union upon God's own foundation. A union of *sects*, as such, by mere concession and compromise is not to be expected; nor is it desirable, as it would not subserve any good purpose, nor would it be the union for which Jesus prayed.

As an example of sectarian union, we may mention what has some times occurred. We have seen some three or four of the "orthodox sects" in a town or neighborhood unite for the time being, for the purpose of holding a protracted meeting, to get up a revival. The leaders would get together and enter into an agreement, that during the meeting they will lay aside all their denominational peculiarities, and preach only on those great themes upon which they all agree. With this compromise of all matters of opinion, for the time being, they go to work, and the meeting is a success, and a "great revival," as it is called, is the result. Many persons are persuaded to become religious. All this is the result of union, such as it is.

But now a graver question arises. What is to be done with the converts? The union is not permanent, and will be dissolved at the close of the meeting into its former elements of sectarianism. Every convert must now choose as to which of the parties he will join, for he must become a sectarian. So far, then, from doing any permanent good, such a compromise has only had the effect to popularize sectarianism. Now, if such a union for a few days will produce such results, what might we not expect if all parties would unconditionally surrender their sectarian peculiarities, and unite permanently on the foundation of

apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ being the chief corner-stone?

III. Upon what foundation or platform can such Christian union be consummated?

We answer: upon the Bible, and the Bible alone. On this divine platform all Christians can unite in a permanent, *visible* union, and that without doing any violence to their faith. To make this matter plain to the understanding of all, we will call a convention of all the popular denominations, for the purpose of discussing and settling the question of a platform on which all can unite.

Present: Lutherans, Presbyterians, Episcopalians, Baptists, Methodists, and Christians. After the reading of a Psalm, and prayer by the Moderator, he proceeds to state the object of the meeting thus:

"Brethren, we have all seen and felt the evils of division, and we have met for the purpose of discussing the subject of union. We want to ascertain whether there is a common ground upon which we may all unite without sacrificing our faith, Christian character, or our self-respect. We are now ready to hear from any of these venerable elders in Israel who may have a suggestion or proposition to make upon the subject."

After a solemn pause a grave old Lutheran brother rises in his place, and speaks to the following effect: "Dear brethren, I have long mourned over the divisions that exist among us, and it has occurred to me that the whole difficulty has grown out of the fact that all Christians, since the days of the great Luther, have not adopted and lived up to our most excellent confession of faith, the 'Augsburg Confession.' Had they done so, all would have been well. And I now propose to heal all division by the adoption, by all, of this excellent document as a platform of union, and bond of communion and fellowship. The Augsburg Confession of Faith, in my opinion, is the best

in the world, because it is nearer like the Bible than any others."

To this all object, except the Lutherans present. A venerable D. D. of the Presbyterian Church spoke against it; he said the doctrine of "CONSUBSTANTIATION" was a monstrous dogma to which he could never subscribe; and many other peculiarities of Lutheranism he could never adopt. To these remarks all agreed, and so the proposition was rejected as impracticable. But the learned doctor of Geneva thought it his duty, while he was up, to submit a platform of union, that he felt confident would be acceptable. It was the "Westminster Confession of Faith." He regarded this as the best confession of faith extant, because it was more in harmony with the Bible. "And I know that you will all admit that that document which is nearest like the Bible, is the nearest perfect, and therefore the best. Now look at our confession of faith, as compared with the Augsburg instrument, and you will see the difference.—Martin Luther and Philip Melancthon made the Augsburg, while the Westminster Confession was made by the most learned, pious, and august body of divines ever assembled together. No less than one hundred and twenty-one divines, and thirty pious lords and gentlemen were engaged for years in preparing it. And you will see that they have quoted scriptures to prove every thing that they put down as an article of faith. Now, by adopting this as the platform and bond of union, we will be happily relieved of the evil of division, of which all so justly complain."

To this seemingly fair proposition all entered their solemn protest, except the doctor himself and his Presbyterian brethren present. The objectors said it contained the monstrous dogma of "eternal unconditional election and reprobation," which virtually makes God the author of sin, and destroys the doctrine of man's moral agency

and his accountability to God, and the liberty of the human will. It also puts into the hands of the ministers of the Presbyterian Church "The keys of the kingdom of heaven, by which they severally have power to *retain* and REMIT sins," etc. We can never receive these dogmas, and therefore can never unite upon this document. It is, therefore, voted down, and laid aside as impracticable.

The Baptists and Episcopalians, in like manner, offered in turn, the "Philadelphia Confession of Faith," and the "Thirty-nine Articles," which were immediately voted down, as unsuited to the purpose of the union of all Christians. Then arose the venerable Bishop Morris, of the Methodist Episcopal Church, and said: "In the midst of all this confusion, I rise to offer a platform of union and co-operation, that I am sure will answer the purpose exactly. I hold in my hand the latest edition of the Discipline of the Methodist Episcopal Church. I propose this little book, containing the doctrines and discipline of the Methodist Episcopal Church, which has been founded on the experience of a long series of years, and the observations and remarks that we have made on ancient and modern churches." "It is the result of *experiment*, which is much better than theory. It is true, we do not claim divine authority for our system, nor do we claim that it is yet perfect; but we do claim to have greatly improved it, since the days of the Wesleys; leaving out many things that were objectionable at first, and substituting other things in their place, more in accordance with the progress and spirit of the age; and we have other changes in contemplation, that will still further modify and improve the system." We think, therefore, that all Christians should at once unite with us upon this platform of union and co-operation, that all our troubles might be ended, and the world converted."

The speech of the venerable and learned bishop made

a decided impression. But in a moment, objections were being urged from various parts of the house. Some object to it, because its doctrines are *Armenian.* Another, because the ninth article says: "That we are justified by faith only, is a most wholesome doctrine and very full of comfort," thus contradicting the Apostle James, who says; "Ye see then, how that by works a man is justified, and NOT BY FAITH ONLY." (James ii, 24.) This was decided to be a flat contradiction! The vote is finally taken, and the bishop's proposition rejected by a decided vote of condemnation, and the "Methodist Discipline," as a foundation and platform for the union of all Christians, goes into the huge pile of rejected books and platforms, as insufficient, and unsafe as a bond of union and communion.

There was now a pause: all seemed perplexed. And Bishop Morris was on the point of moving an adjournment, when the Christian brother arose and addressed the convention to the following effect: "Men, brethren and fathers—I have been listening to your discussion of this most important matter of Christian Union, and I have also been examining your books and platforms, as you have one by one rejected and laid them aside, and I find that every one of them recognizes the 'Bible as the word of God, and the ONLY INFALLIBLE rule of faith and practice.' And I noticed in every speech, that it was urged as a good reason for the adoption of each proposed platform, that is was *nearer like the Bible* than any other. From this I see, or think I see, the difficulty clearly, and how we may come out of it with safety and honor. All these rejected books, contain much that is true and scriptural, but they also contain many things that are merely *human.* And each one embraces, among these *human isms*, the peculiarities of the sect adopting it. Therefore, they are all unsuited to the object of Christian Union; because, in adopting any one of them, we should have to adopt not only what it

contains that is scriptural and true, but we should be compelled to give up our own denominational peculiarities, and adopt those of another, that we regarded as unscriptural. Now, this is asking too much. Such a union is not desirable, and could accomplish no good. It would simply be a sectarian union, having within itself all the elements of discord, and strife. It would be a 'kingdom divided against itself,' and of course would come to naught.

"I, therefore, propose the 'Bible—the whole Bible, and nothing but the Bible,' as the platform and bond of union. In making this proposition, I offer a platform, that you all acknowledge the best one on earth; nay, *the only one that is infallible.* The platforms that have been offered and rejected here to-day, are all *human;* you do not claim perfection for any of them. The one I now offer is divine, and for it I do claim perfection, and you all admit it to be perfect in every particular. In accepting it, no one is called upon to make more sacrifice than others. All are required to sacrifice their *human isms,* and those party names and sectarian peculiarities, which distinguish one sect from another, and all are required to take the word of God alone, as the rule of their lives. In doing this, I would not be giving up to you, nor you to me, but we all would be simply giving up to the Lord. A union thus formed would be 'Christian Union,' and permanent, and just such a union as Jesus prayed for, and the apostles labored to maintain." To this fair proposition no objection could be urged, and the meeting adjourned, to examine the proposition in all its bearings, to meet again upon the call of the moderator.

But it may be said, that the adoption of the Bible alone, as a rule of faith and practice for all Christians, while it would effect a union, it would destroy all denominationalism! So it would. And this is one of the things we wish to accomplish. There can be do such union as Jesus

prayed for, upon any human creed, with its denominationalisms, party name, etc. These tend to divide and scatter the lambs of the fold of Christ. But on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, all can unite and be one, as the Lord prayed. Now I ask, if submission to the word of God alone, should sweep away our party names and sectarian peculiarities, and entirely annihilate all denominationalism, as it would, have we any reason to complain? Surely not. We are not losers, but would be great gainers in such a work. No, indeed, as Christian men and women, we ought to rejoice, that by so doing, we have got clear of so much useless trash, and have become free men and women in Christ Jesus.

Already, many thousands, both in Europe and America have come out from the smoke of Mystic Babylon, and united with the people of God upon the Bible alone; and many thousands more will follow their example. And as the honest and intelligent leave the sects, sectarianism will become more corrupt and intolerant, until it will become what Babylon is described to be in the Apocalypse: "The hold of every foul spirit; and the cage of every unclean and hateful bird."

IV. Under what name can all Christians be united in harmony and love?

To this we answer unhesitatingly, the name "CHRISTIAN," given by divine authority first at Antioch. All will never consent to be called Lutherans, Presbyterians, Episcopalians, Baptists or Methodists. While every truly pious and intelligent Christian man and woman of all denominations, would be perfectly willing to be called "Christians." There is an honor attached to this divine name, of which no sectarian name can boast. It is a regular patronymic from Christ the great head of the church. It was given to the disciples of Christ by divine authority. This can not be said of any sectarian

name; some of which were given by wicked men, in derision and contempt. The name Christian was worn by the disciples of Christ exclusively for several hundred years, until the grand apostacy. It was the "worthy name," under which the martyrs suffered in all the pagan persecutions before the time of Constantine.

Again, Christ is called in the scriptures, "the Husband," and in the church, "the Bride." As a dutiful Bride then, she ought to honor her husband, the Lord Jesus Christ, by wearing his name exclusively. The apostle Peter says, "If any man suffer as a Christian, let him not be ashamed." But suppose a man claiming to be a disciple of Christ, should choose to be called a "Methodist," a "Baptist," or a "Presbyterian," and should suffer *as* a Methodist, Baptist, or *as* a Presbyterian; how then? Why, we think, he would have great reason, in that behalf, to be ashamed; he could not glorify God by any such suffering, as the Lord has required no one to suffer *as* a Methodist, etc.

But it may be said, that a name is nothing. God accepts no one merely on account of his name; but looks to the heart, and if the heart is right, all is right! Now, while we admit that the mere adoption of the name "Christian," does not constitute the Christian character, and render one acceptable to God; yet we do not admit that the name is a matter of no importance. The world is governed by names, to a great extent. Do the names Democrat, Republican, Abolitionist, Copperhead, Traitor, mean nothing? Some of them may have lost much of their former meaning and odium, but they are still very significant, and the masses of the people are governed and greatly affected by them.

The names Catholics, Presbyterians, Baptists, Methodists, are very significant terms, and are at once an index to the faith, opinions and practices of those parties wear-

ing them. So the worthy name Christian, is significant, and means one who loves and follows Christ. And if a man prefers to be called by some sectarian name, it proves that he prefers the *human* to the *divine*, and that he is disposed to honor men, more than Christ. It also proves that he has about him something more than belongs to an humble disciple of Christ. We look upon it as a great and honorable matter, to be permitted to wear the name of our great master, Christ, and to so live that we may deserve it, and receive his approbation at last. But we must hasten to a close.

V. And lastly, having ascertained that the union for which Jesus prayed, was a visible union of all Christians, in one visible organization called the church or body of Christ, and that such union is both possible and practicable; and that the Bible alone is the only sure foundation and platform, upon which such union can be effected; and that the name "Christian" is the divine name by which the disciples of Christ should be called, and under which alone, this union can be formed; we now come in the last place to inquire, "What would be the result of such a union upon ourselves, and upon the world?"

We answer, 1. Such union would make the church strong for good. "In union there is strength," while division is weakness. The apostle says, "Where division is, there is strife and contention, and every evil work." As the matter now stands in the religious world, the different sects waste much of their time and strength in warring with each other, while the work of the Lord is neglected. Their missionaries in foreign lands, by their sectarian strife, cripple each other's influence, and degrade themselves in the eyes of the heathen. The union we propose, then, would remove all this, and make our missionaries abroad of one heart and of one soul, and power-

ful in the hands of the Lord for doing good; and we should enjoy peace and great prosperity at home,

> When each would feel his brother's sigh,
> And with him bear a part;
> When sorrow flows from eye to eye,
> And joy from heart to heart.

We should no longer waste our means and energies in opposing each other, but turning all our means, energies and talents into the legitimate work of the Lord, we should be able to do great things for his cause, and our happiness would be increased a hundred fold, and co-operating together in every good work, we should present an unbroken front to the common enemy.

2. But the grand result of such union is developed in the text, "That the world may believe that thou hast sent me."

In all our efforts to evangelize, we have all felt that something was in the way that greatly hindered our success. And we were sensible that, that something was division. Sinners would listen to the gospel, and perhaps feel impressed with its truth; but then our unholy divisions would come up before their minds, and they would be thrown into doubt and perplexity. But such union as we are contending for gives us an open field for evangelical labor. The church would be the "pillar and support of the truth." We could then go to the world and proclaim the unsearchable riches of Christ, backed up and sustained by a united brotherhood. We could point to the church as an example of the powerful gospel which we proclaim, and the influence would be irresistible. The world would be converted, and the kingdom of our Lord Jesus Christ over all prevail.

May God impress the truth deeply upon every heart, and hasten the happy day when all Christians shall be ONE *Amen.*

SERMON X.

THE CONFESSION OF FAITH.

BY BEN. H. SMITH.

"Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God."—MATT. XVI, 16.

ATTENTION is called to the context in which the above extract is found, embracing the language from the 13th verse to the 20th, inclusive. We have here an acknowledgment of the fulfillment of prophecy; an assertion that realities have taken the place of types; an attestation of the great fact, and of the long-looked for time, when the substance could be viewed in lieu of the shadow. For centuries prior to the utterance of this language, God, through the prophets, had been directing the attention of the people to the office and mission of the person here mentioned. Immediately succeeding the transgression of our first parents in the garden of Eden, the goodness, mercy and benevolence of God, moved him to a divine arrangement for man's redemption from sin, and his escape from the incurred penalty. After hearing the several excuses of Adam and Eve for transgressing the law, he turns to the tempter, and says: "I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed; *it* shall bruise *thy* head, and *thou* shalt bruise *his* heel." In this language there is a *promise;* its fulfillment is the Lord Jesus Christ. From this time, sacrifice, type and prophecy point to Him. The visions of the prophets were constantly directed to the anticipated Messiah, leaving the courts of heaven and the throne of the Father, appearing on earth, and by a voluntary sacrifice of his life, atone for

the sin of the world—thus creating within the hearts of all, a hope of immortality, and making light the dark valley and shadow of death.

It has been said that Christianity is a system, that it presents an assemblage of truths and facts, consummating in a regular, harmonious entirety—that there are links of mutual dependencies, forming one entire and perfect chain. If this be true, the same fundamental laws must govern us in its development, that are employed in the development of all other systems. In the first place, every system must have a fundamental principle, truth or fact, upon which it must stand; which principle, truth or fact, is its cause, source, origin and support. This must be the foundation of the entire superstructure—from which, every thing pertaining to it must proceed. This is evident from the fact, that the only difficulty in forcing conviction of the truth of any system upon the mind of another, is, to convince such an one of the truth, or correctness of the principle, upon which that system is based. The principle may be false; nevertheless, it is truth to him when believed. For many years, the system, so called, of astronomy, was, that the heavenly bodies really revolved from east to west, as they appear to. This system was based upon the supposed correctness of the principle, that the earth was stationary, and consequently, the center of motion. Had the principle been true, the theory would have been correct. The Copernican system, however, removed the principle, and consequently, the theory, upon which the former was based, was false. The Copernican system, which is held to be the true one, maintains that the sun is the great center, around which all the planets revolve, and that the *apparent* revolution of the heavenly bodies from east to west, is in consequence of the *real* revolution of the earth around the sun from west to east. The leading principle, then, of the system of astronomy,

is, that the sun is the common center. Destroy this principle, and the entire system is destroyed. Admit it, and you necessarily admit the existence of the forces of gravitation, attraction, centripetal and centrifugal, and that the earth and all the planets revolve around it, and borrow their light and luster from its rays.

This being true in the physical, will the same apply to the metaphysical? It is certainly true in scientific systems—is it true in religious systems? Let us see. Mohammedism is a system of religion. Now, there must be some cause, source and support of this religion—some leading, fundamental principle upon which the superstructure is reared—some basis for action—something upon which, or from which, the whole system proceeds. What then is that foundation, upon which rests the truth of every thing connected with that system? It is, that *Mohammed was a prophet of God.* Believe this, and you believe every thing connected with the system. You have only to receive as true the leading principle, and you necessarily believe all minor matters pertaining to it, which are only so many satellites revolving around the great central principle—MOHAMMED was a prophet of God. Disbelieve this, and you necessarily discredit the entire system. If, then, we can find the *central idea of Christianity*—its leading, fundamental truth—all other truths and facts connected with the system, are subordinate to this one, revolve around it, and borrow their light and luster from its rays.

We will now look at the passage quoted with the connection in which it appears. Our Saviour is with his disciples, and he asked them, "Whom do men say that I, the Son of man, am?" They reply, "Some say that thou art John the Baptist; some Elias; some Jeremiah, or, one of the prophets." The only explanation that can be given of this reply is, that the doctrine of Pythagoras, styled Metempsychosis, was prevalent at that time; and although

John the Baptist had been beheaded, some believed his soul had passed into the body of Christ; others believed he was in possession of the soul of Elijah, while others believed the soul of Jeremiah, or some other prophet, had taken up its abode with him. After our Saviour had elicited and received an answer to his inquiry as to what others thought of him, he asked his disciples: "Whom say *ye* that I am? And Simon Peter answered and said, Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God." Jesus immediately answered: "Blessed art thou Simon, son of Jonah, for flesh and blood hath not revealed it unto thee, but my Father which is in heaven." We notice incidentally the fact, that a question of some importance has been raised here, as to the *place* and *time* when God revealed to Peter that Christ was his Son. We are aware that God declared Christ to be his Son in the hearing of Peter at the transfiguration, six days after this conversation. This circumstance is brought forward to prove the direct impartation to Peter by the Spirit, in informing him of the truth of his confession. This idea is based upon the supposition that Peter was not upon the banks of the Jordan to hear the voice of God which proclaimed Christ to be his Son immediately after the baptism of our Saviour. Let us see if the direct spiritual theory can claim a support here. The question is—Was Peter present at the baptism of the Saviour? We read, commencing with the fifteenth verse of the first chapter of the Acts of Apostles: "And in those days PETER stood up in the midst of the disciples and said (the number of the names together were about one hundred and twenty), Men and brethren, this scripture must needs have been fulfilled, which the Holy Spirit, by the mouth of David, spake before concerning Judas, which was guide to them that took Jesus. For he was numbered with us, and had obtained part of this ministry. Now this man purchased a field with the reward of iniquity,

and, falling headlong, he burst asunder in the midst, and all his bowels gushed out. And it was known to all the dwellers at Jerusalem, insomuch as that field is called in their proper tongue Alcedama, that is to say, The field of blood. For it is written in the book of Psalms, Let his habitation be desolate, and let no man dwell therein; and his bishoprick let another take. Wherefore of these men which have companied with US all the time that the Lord Jesus went in and out among us, BEGINNING FROM THE BAPTISM OF JESUS unto that same day that he was taken up from us, must one be ordained to be a witness with us of his resurrection." Evidence, then, is conclusive, that PETER was present at the baptism of our Saviour, and when Jesus "came up out of the water," Peter heard the voice of the Great Eternal—a voice that broke the silence that had reigned for years; a voice, the sound of which showed that communication was still had between heaven and earth; a voice that echoed and re-echoed, "This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased."

After Peter had made this confession, which elicited a blessing from the Saviour, the latter said: "And I say unto you, Thou art PETER, and upon this rock I will build my church, and the gates of hades shall not prevail against it." Now, here arises a question: Upon what did Christ propose to build his church? The leading principle, the grand central idea of the Roman Catholic system is, that the church was to be reared upon PETER, and that there are successors of Peter. Hence, the presumed infallibility of the POPE, who claims a direct succession of authority and infallibity from Peter. Destroy this leading principle of Catholicity, and the prop to the system is taken out, and the entire fabric falls; for this is its distinguishing feature.

To sustain this theory Romanists quote the above verse.

Before this scripture can be pressed into the support of this leading feature, it must be shown that the term "rock" (*petra*) refers to PETRA (*Petros*). That there is no reference, the one to the other, is obvious even in our English text. Nor will an appeal to the original text help the theory. *Petros* is masculine, while *petra* is feminine. A simple rule governing the agreement of antecedents settles the matter conclusively, that "this rock," spoken of by our Saviour, upon which he was to build his church, could not refer to PETER. Yet Catholicity rears its superstructure upon this one principle, that the church was built upon Peter! To believe this fundamental principle is to receive as true the teachings of the entire system. To reject it is to reject the "reign of the beast upon which the woman, clothed with scarlet colors, sat; decked with gold, precious stones, and pearls: with a cup in her hand, full of the abominations and filthiness of her fornication; drunken with the blood of the saints, and with the blood of the martyrs; and the inhabitants of the earth have been made drunk with the wine of her fornication; and upon her forehead is written, MYSTERY, BABYLON THE GREAT, THE MOTHER OF HARLOTS AND ABOMINATIONS OF THE EARTH!" Here, then, is the line separating Catholicity from the rest of the religious world. We deny that the Church of Christ was reared upon such poor, frail, perishable material as Peter. What is the nature of that foundation upon which such a structure is reared, that even the powers of *hades* shall not prevail against it? The language of Paul, 1 Cor. iii, 11, is to the point: "For other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus *the* Christ." The mighty fabric, therefore, of Christianity is supported by a fact—that God anointed Jesus—its foundation is the *truth*, that *Jesus is the Son of God.* This is the leading principle, the great central idea of our most holy religion. Believe this truth, and you have believed

every thing that is necessary in order to salvation. All other facts and truths connected with Christianity revolve around this great center, and borrow all their power, splendor, and light from it. From this point we survey the entire length and breadth, and hight and depth of the vast field of human redemption spread out before us. Holding by faith this truth, our conceptions grasp the many subordinate truths and facts connected with it. Our souls feast upon the delights of hope, and we are enabled to quaff with joy from the many streams which flow from this fountain of life. Set aside this leading feature of Christianity, and upon what can we base our hopes of heaven and immortality? Darkness envelops our nature; hope is banished; the grave is cold and dreary; the future unknown; heaven a cheat. But with our feet planted upon "this rock" we can bid defiance to the powers of darkness; hope raises our drooping, weary spirits; the terrors of the grave are dissipated; the bright future is known full of glory and honor; heaven our eternal home—the "rest for the people of God." By faith in this soul-permeating, heaven-born truth, we need not gaze vacantly over this clod of sin and death. We can look toward the skies; our vision can penetrate beyond the heavens above; yea, we can tear away the blue vail over our heads, journey beyond stars, planets, and systems, until we banquet upon the bliss, grandeur, and glory surrounding the throne of the MOST HIGH!

"And I say also unto thee, that thou art PETER, and upon this rock I will build my church, and the gates of *hades* shall not prevail against it." Should the inquiry be still before the mind, as to what this "rock" referred, upon which Christ was to build his Church, a careful re-reading, after what we have said of the context, will satisfy the inquirer. "Whom say ye that I am?" said Christ. PETER responded, "Thou art the Christ, the Son of the

living God. And Jesus answered and said, Blessed art thou Simon, son of Jonah. * * * * And I say also unto thee, that thou art PETER, and upon *this* rock I will build my Church." Hear the apostle again: "For other *foundation* can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus the Christ." Evidently then, *the truth confessed by Peter*—Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God—was to be the *rock*, the firm foundation of the Church of Christ.

The great central truth in Christianity is the Messiahship of Jesus; a truth that vitalizes, and stamps divinity upon the entire system—the Alpha and Omega of our religion. This truth must be *believed*, in order to remission of sins—"he that believeth not shall be condemned." If such momentous issues are involved upon the condition of believing, it is of the utmost importance that we know what it is God commands us to believe. The Saviour told his apostles to "go into all the world and preach the Gospel to every creature; he that believeth (the Gospel) and is baptized shall be saved; he that believeth not shall be condemned." *The Gospel*, then, must be believed. But what is the Gospel? We let the apostle give the information: 1 Cor. 15. "Moreover, brethren, I declare unto you *the Gospel* which I preached unto you, which also you have received, and wherein ye stand. By which also ye are saved, if ye keep in memory what I preached unto you, unless ye have believed in vain. For I delivered unto you first of all, that which I also received, how that Christ died for our sins according to the scriptures, and that he was buried, and that he rose again the third day, according to the scriptures." The question arises—is the belief of the Gospel, and the belief that Jesus Christ is the Son of God, one and the same belief? Is the belief of one, the belief of the other? We call attention to several passages of scripture, bearing upon this

inquiry: "And many other signs truly did Jesus in the presence of his disciples, which are not written in this book; but these are written, that ye might believedthat Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that believing ye might have life through his name." John xx, 30, 31. Again: "Whosoever believeth that Jesus is the Christ is born (begotten) of God." 1 John v, 1–4. "He that believeth (the Gospel) and is baptized, shall be saved." "Who is he that overcometh the world, but he that believeth that Jesus is the Son of God." 1 John v, 5. It will be conceded that the phrases, "have life," "born of God," "saved," and "overcometh the world," are synonymous. We have, then, by substitution: These are written that ye might believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that believing ye might "be saved," through his name. He that beliveth and is baptized shall "have life." Whosoever believeth that Jesus is the Christ, "overcometh the world." Who is he that is "born of God," but he that believeth that Jesus is the Son of God? If these be convertible phrases, it follows that the belief of the Gospel, is the belief that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God. There must be identity here, *for things equal to the same thing are equal to each other.*

Having established the TRUTH to be believed, we now come to the subject of our discourse. Our proposition is, *That which God requires us to* BELIEVE, *we must* CONFESS, *in order to salvation.*

We may be inquired of here: Is not the condition of being "born of God," "overcoming the world," and synonymous phrases, a belief, only, of the truth, as seen from the scriptures quoted? If salvation is upon this condition, why annex additional conditions? The subject, to which we are limited, will not admit of a discussion of the entire plan of salvation. We simply remark, that when the apostles speak of but *one* condition, they by no means

assert that our salvation is secured upon that one condition only. They would impress upon our minds that salvation is not without that condition—there may be other conditions, but nothing less than the mentioned condition will secure remission of sins.

In proof of our proposition, we quote Rom. x, 10: "For with the heart man *believeth* unto righteousness, and with the mouth, *confession* is made unto salvation." The truth believed is, *Jesus Christ is the Son of God*—the same is required to be confessed. It will not do to say, that all that is necessary, is to confess, or profess, Christ in our lives—our walk and conversion, this is necessary—but the confession of which the apostle speaks, is to be made *with the mouth.* It is a confession before witnesses, that *Jesus Christ is the Son of God.* This is confirmed by the apostle, in Heb. xiii, 15. "By him therefore, let us offer the sacrifice of praise to God continually, that is, the fruit of our lips, giving thanks to his name." The original word here rendered, "giving thanks," (*homologeo*) occurs twenty-three times in the New Testament. It is rendered *confess*, or *confesseth*, in our version, eighteen times out of the twenty-three; in this instance, only, is it rendered, "giving thanks." If a uniform translation were made, we would have *confess*, or *confessing*, in every passage in which the word (*homologeo*) occurs, and which would do no violence to the words of the Holy Spirit. It is the same word rendered "confession," in Rom. x, 10, already quoted. We then have: By him, therefore, let us offer the sacrifice of praise to God continually, which is the fruit of our lips, confessing to his name. The apostle would have *the confession of his name with our lips, to bring forth fruit—the sacrifice of praise to God.*

Professed ministers of the Gospel have often attempted to bring into ridicule the expression, "the good confession," as used by our brethren. Charity prompts us to

think that they know not what they do. The Apostle Paul, in his first letter to Timothy, sixth chapter, says: "Fight the good fight of faith, lay hold on eternal life, whereunto thou art called, and hast professed (confessed) a good profession (confession). I give thee charge in the sight of God, who quickeneth all things, and before Christ Jesus, who before Pontius Pilate witnessed a *good confession.*" The original word (*homologia*) rendered *confession*, in the latter verse, is the same word rendered *profession*, in the former verse. If correctly rendered *confession* in the one case, it should be so rendered in every case, unless the sense forbids it. Where, then, we find the word *homologia* in any passage, we may further quote, we will render it uniformly by the word *confession.*

The apostle, Heb. x, 23, says: "Let us hold fast the *confession* (*homologia*) *of our faith* without wavering." In Acts xix, 18, we have this language: "And many that believed, came, and confessed." A "confession of our faith" is a necessity, and the question is still before us, what are we to confess? We quote Heb. iii, 1, "Wherefore, holy brethren, partakers of the heavenly calling, consider the Apostle and High Priest of our confession (*homologia*), Christ Jesus." In this connection, we refer to Heb. iv, 14, "Seeing then that we have a great High Priest, that is passed into the heavens, *Jesus, the Son of God*, let us hold fast our confession" (*homologia*). Can language be plainer, as to the nature of this confession? If additional proof is wanting, we bring forward again the fact, that Christ made the good confession before Pontius Pilate. What that confession was, we may learn from Matt. xxvi, beginning with the 62nd verse; also from Matt. xxvii, 11. The Saviour was before the rulers of the Jews, and adjured by the living God to say, whether or not he was the Christ, the Son of God. He confessed that he was. This, then, is the "good confession" spoken of—

the confession made by Christ, by Timothy, "before many witnesses," by all the Christians cotemporary with the apostles.

How different is this from the theological gauntlet, through which "candidates for baptism" are compelled to run, by some, or all, of the so-called orthodoxy! Jesus says, Whosoever shall confess ME. Yet, strange to tell, the "candidate" employs from five minutes to half an hour in confessing *himself*; in entertaining the congregation with a recital of the heavy clouds of darkness which loomed up in his horizon for days and weeks past; of the time, place and circumstance, when his vision was bright, and his thraldom from sin secured; concluding with an expression of *hope that he has a hope!* Thus, the moment a person has a "hope," he has a *Christian experience*—the former is the cause, while the latter is the effect. This is inverting the order of the apostle, who says, "tribulation worketh patience, and patience experience, and *experience* (worketh) *hope.*" How inconsistent are the teachings of those, who, though they deny that the Church of Christ is built upon Peter, never require of one who wishes to add himself as material to the great spiritual building, a confession of that truth, which is the only foundation of the structure—Jesus Christ is the Son of God. O, that the Protestant world would raise higher the wall of division, or dig deeper and wider the ditch, separating them from the man of sin—the Pope of Rome—cease to build upon *human isms*, for by so doing, they are affiliating more with Rome than with Jerusalem—more with the Pope than with Christ. If all would but unite upon the Bible alone, believing that it thoroughly furnishes us with every good word and work—a sufficient rule for our faith and practice—if we would unite upon the confession of faith made by the nobleman of Ethiopia, and required by Christ—then would Christians meet and mingle their voices in sweet melody and harmony;

then would Christianity accomplish a triumph over all false religions; then would usher in the millennium of peace, which the gospel contemplates, and which Christianity inspires.

But, says one, this confession is too simple! That it is simple, we grant; but at the same time it is comprehensive. The simplicity of the plan of redemption, commends the religion of Jesus Christ to the weak, obtuse mind of man! The finger of derision has often been pointed at this confession—"Simply believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God," says the sneering semi-infidel! They little think that they are aiming a blow, which, if sufficient force were given, would empty out the heart's blood of our religion. They little think they are grasping the pillar which supports the temple of our God, and Sampson-like, would tear away its only prop; burying in the ruins the hopes and heaven-born aspirations of our race; and rearing in its place a towering column, upon which would be inscribed: Infidelity Triumphant!—Christ an Imposter!—Heaven a Cheat!—Christianity a Fiction! As the silly bird, that cleaves the air with almost lightning speed, is supposed to soliloquize: "I desire to go faster; and were it not for the air which impedes my progress, at what a rapid rate would I travel!"—little dreaming that the very thing he would take away, is that which sustains him, and gives him motion! Take away this grand truth, and tell me what remains! Do you wish evidence of its power? It was the belief and *confession* of this truth, that distinguished the friends from the foes of Christ in the days of old. It was this that caused the cruel martyrdom of the apostles. Aye, it was the confession of this truth that nailed our Saviour to the cross! Do you want evidence of the grandeur and comprehensiveness of the truth which we must believe and confess? *Jesus the anointed, the Son*

of God! Take each word, and place it in the scale of human thought, and tell me what it means—what it comprehends? This Jesus, if the Son of God, this God must be the God of the Bible; the Creator of all the unnumbered worlds, that whirl and blaze in all their glory around the eternal throne, the star-decked canopy of heaven, the erratic comet, the meteor's glare, as it leaves its brilliant track across the arch that spans our world, are but the symbols of his greatness, the workmanship of his hands; while the lurid lightning's flash, that stripes with golden tint the angry cloud, is but a faint expression of his vengeance; and the awful tones of thunder that follow, are but a prelude to that voice that ere long shall echo and re-echo from land to land, and from sea to sea, declaring that "time shall be no more." Do you say it is an unmeaning confession—that it does not embrace enough? How much would you have it embrace? Jesus declares that upon this truth he would build his church! It is the pivot upon which all things else revolve. It is, and will ever be, the highest key-note in every anthem of the angelic choir. It is the dazzling star that guides us to his divinity. It is the consummation of types, the goal of the prophets, and the full fruition of all our hopes. It is the sun of our existence, and the sure guarantee of future glory. It stands in the midst of God's innumerable truths, shining apart in peerless attraction, as the great light whence emanate the beams of divine love to a lost and guilty world. The objection that this truth and its confession do not embrace enough, must fall, when we take into our vision the vast field which they survey. Indeed, our finite vision can not fully explore the boundless area contemplated. It will only be when eternity dawns, that we can grasp its magnitude, and conceive of the incident grandeur and glory. Talk about there not being *enough* in this confession!

How insignificant are the formalities commonly employed! The questions asked, and the answers, whether voluntary or extorted, are too narrow to place side by side with this truth which we confess. We want all to publicly acknowledge that JESUS IS THE MESSIAH—our Prophet, Priest and King—with the divine assurance that Christ will own and confess us before his Father and the holy angels.

SERMON XI.

THE KINGDOM OF THE HEAVENS.

BY JAMES CHALLEN.

And saying, Repent ye: for the kingdom of heaven is at hand.—MATT. iii, 2.

And I say unto you, That many shall come from the east and west, and shall sit down with Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob, in the kingdom of heaven.—MATT. viii, 11.

IT is not without design that the kingdom of God is so often spoken of in the New Testament as "The kingdom of the heavens" (Gr.). Although it may sound strange to our ears, it is the common formula employed by the Great Teacher in setting forth that order of things which he came to establish and administer on earth. Though we may not be able to see and appreciate the reasons for this announcement, there must have been some in his own mind or it would not have been so designated.

We have often observed a deep meaning in words and expressions used by the Messiah and his apostles, which the more careless reader has overlooked. In some of these there lie hid a vein of thought—pure and rich as the gold of Ophir.

In nothing is our folly more manifest than the attempt to explain away or to ignore the sayings of Christ, or to accommodate them to some theory of our own. The truth is thus hidden from our eyes, the divine links in the chain of inspiration are broken, and we are left in error and in darkness. The Jewish nation missed their Messiah and rejected him when he came, by adopting this fatal mistake; are we not likely to fall into the same error in regard to

the second appearing of the Lord Jesus Christ? They spiritualized the prophets when they spoke "of the sufferings of the Christ," and we are doing the same, when they, and the apostles speak "of the *glories* that shall follow." The danger to us will be greater than to them, inasmuch as we fail to be warned by their example or instructed by the additional light we have on the entire subject.

We have done well in the restoration of the ancient faith; shall we not leave our work but half complete if we neglect the hope? The past, as it looks to the present salvation, is secure for all coming time; but the future, as it anticipates the eternal salvation at "the appearing and the kingdom" of our Redeemer is not so clear. The same close and scriptural attention to this subject, will amply reward us. We need but apply the principles of interpretation to the latter that we have done to the former, and the results will be glorious.

The field of prophetic scripture is to many wholly unexplored. We should seek to enter into it. It is a part of Immanuel's ground and rich with all that is precious and good. It is the Eden of Scripture—a garden which the Lord has blessed. It is a large part of those divine oracles "given by inspiration of God," and which "is profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, and for instruction in righteousness."

It is no easy thing to divorce our minds from prejudice or free ourselves from the traditions of the fathers. We may encounter as much opposition in reference to the prophecies which look to the future, as we have met in reference to the plain teachings of the Messiah, with respect to the gospel or "the present truth." But we are bold and courageous and Canaan is before us. Have we none among us whom we can send from the wilderness into the promised land? They will certainly find another Eshcol, and bring from the valley a cluster of grapes, with figs

and pomegranates. It is a goodly land. The footprints of patriarchs and prophets are there. It is thy land, O Immanuel!

The pre-millennial view of the second advent of Christ, was held by all the "Fathers" in the first two centuries of the church, as all must admit. Those who lived nearest the apostles and were cotemporary with them held to it. This is something in its favor. When the church became secularized by its connection with the empire, it gradually diminished its hold upon the doctrine, and favored the idea of progress and Christian civilization, as all-sufficient to fulfill the hopes of the prophets, and to realize their grand prospective delineations in regard to the ultimate triumphs of truth over error, and light over darkness, and good over evil. Origen, by his system of allegorical interpretation, mingled with the philosophy of the Greeks, threw endless confusion upon this, and all other subjects found in the scriptures of truth. Then came, for a thousand years, the dark ages, in which nothing shone but the gilded temples, the glittering crowns and jeweled tiaras of the papacy. Rome and its priesthood; its shrines and its altars; its feast days and fasts; its ritual and offerings; its wealth and its kingdom, were the only millennium the church then needed or desired. It was the Eden of the sensualist, the paradise of the serpent, the kingdom of the clergy—the empire of Satan!

A few of the faithful still lived in the mountains; in caves and in dens; or in unbroken forests; or hid themselves in the catacombs beneath the imperial city. They retained the ancient faith and hope; but they were persecuted and slain. But there was light in their dwellings. They lived in Goshen—all beyond them was Egypt and Babylon.

After the Reformation by Luther, the scriptures were taken out of the cloisters in which they had been buried, and the "one hope" again gladdened the heart of Luther,

Calvin, Melancthon, and others. The same destiny for the church, which gave such a mighty impulse to the faith and hope of the "Fathers," and the first Christians, appeared anew. But in process of time the union of church and state—never fully divorced in Europe—deadened the religious sense of the people, and prepared the way for a system more in accordance with the pride and ambitious hopes which every where prevailed.

Dr. Whitby, of the Church of England, a man of transcendent genius and learning, is the author of the modern theory of a Spiritual Millennium. It was gradually accepted, and has been sustained by popular vote until this day. He acknowledged that it was not the ancient faith; and he gave it as an innovation upon the established theories of the purest days of the church. Our Bible societies, Missionary, Tract, and other similar institutions—good in themselves, are the outgrowth of this system. The world, according to this theory, was to be converted by the rapid increase of light by the gospel and these accessories, and finally reconciled and redeemed; the golden age of prophets and apostles would be restored, and the earth be filled with the glory of the Lord. What with the new impulse given to the world by the recovery of the lost arts; by the revival of learning; by a more Christian civilization; by the knowledge of the exact sciences; by a cultivated taste; by a sounder philosophy; by railroads and steam power; by the printing press and the telegraph, and universal peace—Paradise would be restored, the world regenerated, and heaven come down as before the eating of the fatal apple!

We were all captivated by this grand thought in regard to the future. We supposed that by this time our fondest hopes would have been realized, and that the work would be done. But "where is the wisdom of the Scribe?" where the disputer of this age?" "Has not God made

foolish the wisdom of this world?" The sects stand just where they did—only in a worse condition. They see and feel the necessity of union, but dare not sacrifice denominationalism to obtain it. They still cowardly compromise the truth or withhold it for the sake of party. Destructive substitutes, resting on tradition, on inference and custom, have displaced the positive institutions of heaven. Human authority has legislated out of the kingdom the laws and ordinances of the Christ; and human creeds have superseded the divine. Each party aspires after the pre-eminence, and hopes for a millennium by absorbing all the rest. Ecclesiasticism is exalted above the Church of Christ, and numbers have claimed as their special right the prestige of "orthodoxy." The rights of conscience have been trampled under foot by the usurpations of the assembly and the synod, the associations and the conference. The apostasy is as huge as ever. Rome still stands impregnable. The Church of England is still the church of Henry the Eighth. The Presbyterian, the Baptist, and the Methodist Churches are as far apart as ever, and not half as pious as they were a hundred years ago. Paganism holds on as in the past. Mohammedanism is still alive. "Darkness covers the earth, and gross darkness the minds of the people."

According to this theory, judging from the past, a spiritual millennium never will come. It would take a million of years for any one sect to swallow up the rest, even if it had all the learning, wealth, and influence which the world could furnish; and what would be the result? The goal would be as far removed from us as it now is. The theory must be wrong or there can be no "last days," and no hope for "the restitution of all things."

The only ground of expectation ever entertained by those who advocate a spiritual millennium without the personal presence of the Saviour, is in the outpouring of the

Spirit in revivalism! What reliance can be placed in this our experience and pleadings for the last forty years, will abundantly show.

But enough has been said on this subject to prepare the way for the introduction of our theme—"The kingdom of the Heavens."

In every single case, so far as we have examined Matthew's Gospel, the plural form of "the heavens" is used in connection with the kingdom. Consult the following in the Greek: Matt. iii, 2; x, 7; v, 3; x, 19; xviii, 3; vii, 21; xvi, 19. There may be exceptions, but this is the rule.

We can not suppose that this formula happened by accident, or was made without design, or that our Saviour would have used these words unless for some definite purpose; nor can we suppose that the "Spirit of Wisdom and Revelation," who brought all things to the remembrance of the apostles as taught by the Saviour, would have employed this phraseology unless it had a value which could not otherwise be expressed. Matthew wrote his testimony for the benefit of the Jews, and he is the one who most frequently uses these words, "The kingdom of the heavens." Mark, Luke, and John usually speak of "the kingdom," or "the kingdom of God." The reason why Matthew employs this term may be, that as he wrote for the benefit of his own countrymen, who were familiar with the writings of the prophets, they would be better able to understand its meaning and feel its importance. Examples illustrating it are abundant: "Give ear, O ye heavens, and I will speak." Deut. xxxii, 1. "Behold the heaven and the heaven of heavens can not contain thee." 1 Kings viii, 27. "Our trespass is grown up into the heavens." Ez. ix, 6. "Thy mercy, O Lord, is in the heavens." Ps. xxxvi, 5. "The Lord has prepared his throne in the heavens." Ps. ciii, 19. "The heavens do rule." Dan. iv, 26. The law, the prophets, and the Psalms speak of

"the heavens" as the abode of God and of angels. It was, then, in perfect harmony with this, that the word in the plural form is used by the Saviour in reference to the throne and kingdom he came to introduce.

The kingdom of God had its origin not in heaven, but in the heaven of heavens. It came from the throne of the Majesty in the heavens, on which the Messiah now sits, and where the "heavens do rule." It has no lower origin than this, and can have no higher. Our Saviour said that His kingdom was not of the earth; and it has no sympathy with the atmospheric heavens over which the prince of the power of the air presides, and which shall be destroyed by fire. It is emphatically from above—"above all heavens," into which our Prince has entered.

We know but little of these ancient heavens, their extent and glory, or the thrones and principalities therein; their divisions, ranks, and orders; but whatever they may be, however vast and extensive their dominion, they constitute but one kingdom, one empire—"the kingdom of the heavens." It may be illimitable, and beyond all conception glorious and sublime. Jehovah is its King. He is called so, not because He has borrowed it from the language of earth, but as having lent it to those who bear office among men. Human government is but the shadow of the divine, and its official dignitaries but images of what is real and personal in the heavens. "The kingdom of the Heavens" is not a figurative expression, but most literal. It symbolizes the only empire that shall stand forever. It can not be shaken—never shall be moved. "The kingdom of God," as established on the earth under the reign of the Messiah, is only a part of the celestial and the heavenly,—

> "What if earth
> Be but the shadow of heaven, and things therein
> Each to other like, more than on earth is thought."

As a reward to the Messiah for His sufferings and death, "the heavens received Him," and will retain Him until He shall come in the clouds to earth again. The kingdom of the heavens was transferred to Him by the Father, and he is now the ruling sovereign of the universe. He will one day be proclaimed as "King of kings and Lord of lords." Every knee shall bow to Him, and every tongue confess that He is Lord to the glory of God the Father. The whole intelligent universe and all worlds have been put under his dominion and control. He is the Head of all principalities and powers. The Son of Mary—the Son of God, is the heir of all things. This is the grandest thought in the whole compass of divine revelation. It is the most enrapturing, soul-cheering, soul-ennobling conception ever made known to man. Heb. ii; Phil. ii, 5–11.

It will be observed that under our anointed Lord it was contemplated that all ranks, orders, and dignities, angelic and human, should be gathered into one kingdom. Redeemed humanity, under the Patriarchal, Jewish and Christian ages, whatever may have been their subordinate relations to each other; and all angelic beings, however diversified in rank and station, or myriad-like in number, are placed under His sovereign rule. His unlimited authority will be acknowledged by all. This is what Paul calls in one place, "the mystery," the grand secret of God's will, made known to the apostles, and through them to us, according to the good pleasure purposed in Himself, "that in the economy of the fullness of the ages, he might gather in one, all the persons under the Messiah, both which are *in the heavens* and upon the earth." Eph. i, 10; Col. i, 18–20.

It will be seen, then, that the kingdom over which Jesus reigns, is a kingdom composed of all that are or may be redeemed out of the earth, in all ages, past, present, and to come; and of all ranks and orders of unfallen angels,

harmonized, reconciled, and gathered together into one united and glorious empire. Under Him, and Him alone, has been placed this everlasting kingdom. "He is Lord of all." The kingdom as seen on earth is but one grand phase of this empire—an episode naturally arising out of it. It is a cycle in that infinite series which fills up the unmeasured ages of eternity. It contains the great drama of redemption which alone will be complete when Jesus shall see the travail of his soul, and shall be satisfied. It developes more of the wisdom, power, and goodness of God—His grace, mercy, and truth, than any other period known in the calendar of eternity. It excites more interest and a deeper sympathy in "the heavens," than ever have been awakened before, and will be the theme of everlasting song and of immeasurable rapture. The church redeemed will be a volume ever unfolding to the eyes of cherubim and seraphim, the deep mystery of God's wisdom and philanthropy. Each one of the saved will be a distinct subject for thought, and the whole family of the redeemed a sacred roll extending from the Paradise lost to the Paradise regained.

What a divine significance is there in the fact of our entrance into this kingdom—a kingdom which has come from heaven to earth; a kingdom existing in fact before it came, but hitherto unknown upon the earth, until it was set up under the reign of the Messiah. By a birth of water and of spirit we are permitted to enter into it and become its citizens. What blissful relations do we sustain! what goodly fellowships! what royal and princely associations! what divine and eternal privileges! "Now are we the sons of God, but it doth not yet appear what we shall be."

How little do we understand the "new birth," if we think its meaning exhausted, by entering into the church, even in its highest sense, and especially so when entering

into a church! The penitent believer in his immersion does not so properly enter into the church at Rome, in Ephesus, or Colosse, as he enters into "the kingdom of the heavens." He becomes incorporated with a living, most vital, and as far as our conceptions reach, a universal empire, part of which is now on the earth and visible to our senses, and part in the unseen—and part in the heaven of heavens.

In making converts let us remember that we are adding new subjects to the kingdom; filling up the complement of the saved; naturalizing men and women as "citizens of the heavens." Let us turn away our eyes from the party divisions of the earth and fill up the number of the redeemed. And we who belong to the great family, let us live worthy of our high calling and the glorious destiny that awaits us, if we be found faithful to our covenant relations.

This kingdom is called "the kingdom of the heavens," not only on account of its origin and nature, but because its King and his subordinates, the dignitaries of state are in the heavens, and although his government extends to and is exercised over men upon the earth, yet it is not of the earth. "My kingdom," said Jesus, "is not of this world." It has a higher origin and destiny than any other kingdom. All others are to be broken to pieces, but this shall stand forever. All others occupy but a small portion of the earth, but his is universal.

At present the king is not seen; he is to us invisible. Even the great princes of his empire and the "spirits of the just" are not yet made manifest; they are not known to the world. But the day is coming when He shall appear in his beauty, accompanied with his saintly retinue. The spirits of the just clothed with the robes of immortality, with bodies spiritual and incorruptible, shall stand revealed to the eyes of men. The angels will then

"come forth"—now hidden, and sever the wicked from among the just. They do their blessed ministrations now unseen, but then they will be revealed and fully recognized. As a portion of the kingdom celestial and unfailing, they take the deepest interest in everything connected with our redemption. They sympathize with us in our afflictions. They minister to us in our misfortunes. They defend us in the midst of our perils. They fight our battles and disarm our adversaries. And as many of our enemies are unseen and potent, they meet them in secret and baffle them in their plots and schemes for our destruction. Mighty powers are arrayed both for and against us; but error is always weak, evil is unable to cope with good, or darkness with light. These elder sons of light have had a large experience, and are richly endowed; and they exercise a tender care and a watchful vigilance over the minor children of God's great family. They are with us in sickness and carry us to paradise at death, and will be present at the resurrection to escort us to our everlasting home. In the intricate movements of the wheels of providence they play a mighty part, and the destiny of individuals and families, of churches and nations are under their agency and control.

A glorious future is reserved for the faithful followers of Christ. If they suffer with him here they shall be glorified hereafter. The rewards of the conqueror are not to be found upon the field but after the war has ended. "The kingdom and the greatness of the kingdom under the whole heaven shall be given to the saints of the people of the Most High, whose kingdom is an everlasting kingdom, which shall not pass away and whose dominion shall never end." Those who shall be found worthy to share in the first resurrection will become kings and priests unto God, and shall reign with Christ a thousand years over redeemed humanity upon the earth. Those who shall es-

cape the desolating flood of fire at the coming of the Lord shall be their subjects and will receive their princely and priestly ministrations. There still will be found on earth men in the flesh, as families and political organizations, but they will be subjected to the rule and authority of the only potentate—the King of kings and his subordinate rulers. "All nations, kindreds, tongues, and peoples" shall own his sovereign sway and acknowledge his powerful scepter.

The apostles, as a reward for following Jesus in the days of his flesh; and as the chosen and faithful ambassadors of his reign in the day of tribulation and suffering, shall sit nearest his throne in Jerusalem, and shall have due honors conferred upon them. "Verily, I say to you, that, in the restoration, when the Son of man shall sit on his glorious throne, you also who have followed me shall sit on twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel." This day has not yet come. The Saviour sits on his Father's throne, and the twelve hold no regal scepters, but the day is at hand when it shall be fully accomplished. Israel in the flesh is still beloved for the Fathers' sakes—Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. They shall return to their own land, and will inherit it. They will be converted there and not before. They will see the King in his beauty and shall say, "This is our God, we have waited for him." "Blessed is he that comes in the name of the Lord!" shall be heard from the lips of the outcasts and the preserved in Zion. They will become the center of that mighty realm over which the Messiah shall reign, and Jerusalem be the capital of his kingdom on the earth. "All nations shall flow into it, and many people shall go and say, come ye, and let us go up to the mountain of the Lord, to the house of the God of Jacob, and he will teach us of his ways and we will walk in his paths; for out of Zion shall go forth the law and the word of the Lord from Jerusalem.

And he shall judge among the nations and shall rebuke many people; and they shall beat their swords into plow-shares and their spears into pruning-hooks; nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any more. Isa. ii, 1–4; comp. Ps. lxxii; Isa. xxvii, 12, 13; Jer. xxxi, 6–8; Ps. xlvi; Hos. ii, 18.

This passage may have had a partial fulfillment on the day of Pentecost, but its full complement is reserved for a brighter day than ever yet has dawned upon our sin-ruined earth. "Many people" have never yet gone up to learn the ways of the Lord. Jesus, as yet, has never assumed the office of judge among the nations. No nation, not even the most Christianized, has ceased to learn the art of war. England and America have made it their special study, and are the most perfect adepts in it on earth. The spears have not been converted into pruning-hooks nor their swords into plow-shares. It is easy to spiritualize all this away, and accommodate it to our low conceptions of God's infinite and glorious designs; but the word of God is a tried word, and his promises shall never fail.

There is not a Christian nation on the earth. There are Christians among the nations, and the influence of Christian principles is felt in society and over human governments and wherever the gospel is known. There is scarcely a shire, a neighborhood, or county, in the most favored portions of our globe, that has been brought fully under the authority of Christ. Many of these glorious predictions concerning "the latter days" we have given to the sects and parties which have ruined Christendom. We have robbed Israel in the flesh to enrich the church in her present suffering state; and the gorgeous sunrise of millennial glory we have cast over the decayed and waning fortunes of apostate institutions and corrupt forms of the Christian religion. This accommodating spirit has disposed of nearly everything of value in the prophetic scrip-

tures and has tyrannized over the faith and hope of the church for ages. We should displace it by the application of sounder principles of interpretation, and the hidden treasures of the scriptures of truth will be disclosed to our wondering and admiring eyes.

Let us be faithful to our acknowledged principles of interpretation as applied to the gospel of Christ and the ordinances of the Christian Institution, and permit the prophecies to speak out in their own fearless and robust manner, whether in literal or figurative forms of speech. We should receive with reverence their oracular communications, whether our reason or philosophy approve them or not. They may dash to pieces our most cherished theories in regard to unfilled prophecy. They may render useless many excerpts, skeletons and preparations for the pulpit. They will undermine our beautiful theories in regard to human progress, and the gradual conversion of the world by modern appliances, but they will open a field of inquiry wide as the heavens and glorious beyond all conception. It will enable us to understand more fully the relations we stand in to the age in which we live, and the duties involved, and to the more glorious age which lies before us at "the appearing and kingdom of our Lord Jesus Christ."

There is a suffering and a triumphant form and condition of the kingdom of God. The first allies itself to the despised Nazarene—the man of sorrows—the lowly Redeemer of our race. Its great symbol is the cross, outside the gates of Jerusalem. There it stands, and staid with his blood—the blood of the King of martyrs—the blood of atonement! It rises up before us as the accepted token of trial and suffering to all who would enter into the kingdom. It reminds us of Bethlehem and Nazareth, of weariness and want; of painfulness and privation. It speaks to us of insult and outrage, of reproach and persecution.

The dew that rests upon it is the dew of tears; and the air that surrounds it is full of sighs and groans coming from Gethsemane, and from the Sanhedrim and Pilate's bar; the wail of ages of suffering and sorrow mingle with them and swell the deep diapason from the tongues of martyrs and confessors—the partakers of Christ's sufferings. The faith of all ages is fixed upon it, and every disciple "is crucified with Christ." But if there is a suffering, there is also a triumphant condition of "the kingdom of the heavens." This allies itself to the crown and the King in his glory, and appeals to our hope. The ages which are past have anticipated it. Abraham saw the grand capitol of this kingdom, and walked humbly before God in hope of entering into it. The prophets leaped over the suffering state of the kingdom, to catch the inspiration of its crowning glories. Enoch, the seventh from Adam, overlooked all that lay between him and "the day of the Lord," and saw him "coming with his holy myriads;" and the Saviour in his transfiguration, gave to Peter, James, and John, a faint idea of its transcendent glory; and the last of the apostles saw it approach with its descending King, and said: "Come quickly." The Bride, the Lamb's wife, has been waiting for the day impatient for his return. She has felt her loneliness and poverty, more like a widow in mourning, than as his empress queen. But "the kingdom and the greatness of the kingdom under the whole heaven" shall be hers, when Jesus our Lord shall come.

Wherefore we receiving a kingdom that can not be moved, let us have grace, whereby we may serve God acceptably, with reverence and godly fear: For our God is a consuming fire."

SERMON XII.

SACRED TIME.

BY S. K. HOSHOUR.

"The Son of man is Lord also of the Sabbath."—LUKE VI, 5.

THERE are several requisites to vital existence: a substratum upon which it can be located—space to move in—food for its subsistence—and *time* for the development of its endowments out, and the indication of its mission into this portico of existence. But of all these, time has a paramount essentiality. For there might be a substratum upon which animated existence could be located—means for subsistence—space for action, but if time for development and continuance were wanting, all these would be useless.

But what is time?—various definitions have been given—among which I select the following: "Time is the *condition* of *being*, *regarded as in action*, *movement*, *change*. As *extension* is essential to material forms, so *succession* is essential to movement and changes. It is the *place of events*, as space is of forms."

Poets represent it less abstractly—define it as a narrow isthmus, lying between the eternity *past* and the eternity *to come*. And one of no secondary position in the domain of poesy, sings in the following strain:

"From eternity's mysterious orb, Time was cut off
And cast beneath the skies—the skies that watch him in his new abode,
Measuring his motion by revolving spheres, that horologe machinery divine.
Days, months, and years, his children play around him as he flies."

The divisions of time, natural and artificial, are, under all circumstances, interesting, upon which, however, we can not now dilate—an enumeration of them must suffice. The natural divisions are days, months, years and cycles; the artificial are seconds, minutes, hours and centuries. In this enumeration the week is not included, for the reason that it is neither a natural nor artificial division. It *is a revealed division.* There is no motion in the physical world, known to us, that indicates a septenary division, and all the artificial divisions are expressed in *even*, not in *uneven* numbers.

The septenary, or weekly division, prevailed among the most ancient civilized populations of the globe, indicative of a common origin, the primogenitor of the race who attained it through divine tuition. When the heavens had been garnished with their respective luminaries; when the sea had been filled with its active and sportive tenantry; when the dry land had been replenished with its diversified departments of enjoying existences; when Eden had been hedged in and beautified by the hand of God; when the primitive pair intact by pollution, had entered upon its luscious entertainments; when a new and unsullied creation had evoked the harmonies of the morning stars, and elicited the shouts of the sons of God—*then* the divine Hand ceased its creative labors in this portion of his universe—then was the seventh day blessed and sanctified, and the Sabbath instituted! It is pertinent on the present occasion that I should dilate on the divine authority for observing sacred and Sabbatical time. This can be done by reference to the divine code—to the threatenings of God against its violators, on the one hand, and to the constitution and wants of man, on the other.

To arrive at the origin and primitive circumstances of this institution, it is not within my province, nor my duty, to expatiate on the divine existence—on the great proba-

bility that God takes such an interest in the prosperity of the race, as to favor man with a revelation of his will; nor on the divine legation of Moses, who furnished record containing a summary detail of the Sabbath; nor whether the first three chapters of Genesis are to be taken literally, or considered as a significant myth. The divine legation of Moses, and the literalness of his narrative are looked upon as conceded by you.

I am aware that it has been alleged that Moses spoke, in Genesis, of the Sabbath, which simply means *rest*, by *anticipation;* and that the historian, writing after it had been instituted, at the base of Mount Sinai—*there* gives the reason of the institution; that it did not exist prior to the egress of the Israelites from Egypt, two thousand five hundred years after the commencement of the human race. This was the opinion of Dr. Paley, as discussed in his Moral Philosophy.

It is readily admitted, the references to the Sabbath, during the patriarchal period, are not very clear. Moses nowhere gave a professed history of the Sabbath—neither did he of the rite of circumcision, but still there are expressions, here and there, scattered throughout his general narratives, which serve as a way-mark in this matter.

It is said, in *process* of time, Cain and Abel brought sacrifices to the Lord—literally, at the division, the section of time, that is, the hebdomedal or weekly section—they brought oblations to the Lord—they sacrificed on the Sabbath.

Noah entered the Ark, seven days prior to the flood. In the emission of the raven and the dove, his explorers of the newly laved earth, and especially in the case of the dove, he observed intermissions of seven days, and in all probability he left the Ark on the last day of the sacred week.

At the introduction of the manna among the Israelites, which was *prior* to the giving of the decalogue that con

tains the injunction, "Remember the Sabbath to keep it holy," Moses explains certain phenomenon in relation to that food, in language that obviously indicates that the prior existence of the Sabbath was a known fact. He did not in that case use the language of injunction, but rather of *explanation.* Neither did he in any other of his narratives, alluding to this matter, speak by way of *command,* until he furnished the summary of moral laws, embodied in the decalogue; and here the verbiage of the injunction is such as indicates a prior existence of the institution: "*Remember* the Sabbath day to keep it holy."

In speaking, then, of the authority for observing Sabbatical, or rest time, we may well pause a little at this period of its history. Here we find it a constituent of a code of laws, the decalogue—in which the shrewdest jurists have never been able to find a flaw—never detected a deficiency or a superfluity; a code, in relation to which, one of the most profound civilians who thought he could negative successfully every claim of Moses to a divine mission, observed he could not perceive *whence* its "*perfection*" came, unless from the perfect Governor of the Universe!

Is, then, the Sabbath an *indispensable constituent of a complete moral code, or system of moral laws?* Does it belong to the number of those laws or institutions absolutely essential to human happiness? Unquestionably.

What are moral laws? Answer: Such as tend to happiness of moral agents. The ultimate object of action is happiness, which, however, lies only in the direction of moral principles and consistent action. Complete happiness involves an easy and undisturbed *state* and activities of all the powers and endowments pertaining to a rational, moral and conscious existence. All *laws*, then, have a moral complexion, that have a tendency to lead to such a consummation—the happiness of man. Stealing is *immoral,*

because it interferes with the happiness of others; so is false testimony; so is adultery, etc.

The Sabbath belongs to the category of moral laws, because it stands inseparably connected with interests deeply entering into the temporal and eternal well-being of man. And as all the other laws of the decalogue are beyond abrogation by man, are of divine authority, and of abiding obligation, so is that which pertains to the Sabbath or sacred rest.

There are some laws that are of abiding obligation, they can not be affected or abrogated by any modification of the existing economy, or by the introduction of a new one; they must obtain in every successive economy imposed by the Creator on man; they are moral laws, their order may be transposed, their verbiage changed, and local penalties modified or mitigated, but still they are an essential constituent in every summary of divine law—so with the law in relation to Sabbatical time.

The importance of the Sabbath is also apparent in the divine admonitions to the Jews relative to it, and in the severe penalties inflicted by the Lord on the violators of it. "Thus saith the Lord, Take heed to yourselves, and bear no burdens on the Sabbath day, nor bring it in by the gates of Jerusalem. Neither carry forth burdens out of your houses on the Sabbath day; neither do ye any work, but hallow ye the Sabbath as I commanded your fathers. But they obeyed not, neither inclined their ear, but made their neck stiff, that they might not *hear*, nor receive any instruction. And it shall come to pass, if you diligently hearken unto me, saith the Lord, to bring in no burdens through the gates of the city on the Sabbath day, but hallow the Sabbath, to do no work therein, then shall there enter into the gates of the city, kings and princes sitting upon the throne of David, riding in char-

iots, and on horses, they and their princes, the men of Judah, and the inhabitants of Jerusalem, and the city shall remain forever; but if you will not hearken unto me, to hallow the Sabbath day, then will I kindle a fire in the gates thereof, and it shall devour the palaces of Jerusalem, and it shall not be quenched." Jer. xvii, 21–27.

"Then I contended with the nobles of Judah, and said unto them: What evil thing is this that ye do, and profane the Sabbath day. Did not your fathers thus, and did not our God bring all these evils upon us, and upon this city? Yet, ye bring more wrath upon Israel by profaning the Sabbath." Neh. xiii, 17, 18.

An institution, the violation of which superinduces such fearful visitations as the Jews *have*, and are now *enduring*, must be from a higher than human source.

Again: Our various endowments, physical, intellectual and moral, make it necessary for our happiness, to use the means originally designed to keep them in the best condition, and to conduct them to an end allied to the great end of our existence; hence the necessity of rest for the body, and leisure and means of improvement for the moral and intellectual elements belonging to us. These means are embodied in the Sabbatical institution. That our physical structure needs periodical rest, needs no discussion; it is apparent to the commonest observer in the succession of day and night. The shades of the night silence the melody of the grave—hush the din of active life—and allay the fervor of worldly pursuits. Sleep, nature's sweet restorer, wraps the weary toilers in his mantle of forgetfulness, until the birth of a new day. Is this nightly rest adequate to restore the full measure of exhausted energies? Not for laborious society. It has been repeatedly proclaimed from the tribunals of physiology, that to the nocturnal, other periodical rest must be added,

in order to conduct human existence to a goal, for which infinite Wisdom has designed it—and from the same source we are taught that no repose is so conducive to this end as septenary, or every seven days' rest—*more frequent* would be an excess, adverse to the interest of secular life, and *less frequent*, inadequate for the proper restoration of wasted energies.

France, in the reign of infidelity and terror, abrogated the Christian Sabbath, and substituted the "Decades," that cessation is enjoined from labor every ten days. But experience, and the general tendency of things, compelled her to abandon that division, and imperiously demanded a return to the weekly.

Experiments in continuous labor without any regard to the Sabbath, have clearly demonstrated that weekly repose is essential to comfortable and protracted existence. It has been ascertained that among horses and other beasts of burden, subject to daily incessant toil, four times the mortality occurred than did among those that had weekly rest. Of two thousand laborers who had been induced to labor on the Sabbath day for double wages on some public work, the majority became subjects of most afflictive diseases, in many instances issuing in premature mortality. During wars it has been a matter of common observation, that when the soldiery had to labor incessantly for weeks on some fortification, disease and death were more abundant among them.

Unremitting toil breaks down the liveliest spirits, and extinguishes the most effective motives to exertion. All compelled by the force of circumstances to labor without days of rest, find the result not only a decay of strength, but also a diminution of the aggregate amount of productive effect. Health, genius, strength, and all the functions of the mind are prostrated by such a process. He who labors six days and rests on the seventh will, in a given

time, accomplish more than if he were to labor without intermission during the whole period. The institution is exactly adapted to the human organism. Like the recurrence of balmy night, it frees the mind from corroding cares, disenthrals the body from servile labor, and prepares it for future exertion.

The Sabbath meets toiling man, and exacts rest—the plow must stand still in the furrow—the hammer lie silent on the anvil—the hum of machinery ceases—the din of the locomotive is silent—the merchant locks up—the judge decends from the bench—the politician must leave the arena of fierce discussion—grateful stillness reigns in the community, the hamlet, the town, and the city!

But the needs of man extend beyond the mere repose of the body. He needs *leisure* for the improvement of his higher endowments. He is a social being, and as such he requires social intercourse with his cotemporaries, not, indeed, in the low grounds of carnal indulgences, but under circumstances highly conducive to the evoking of his devotion, benevolence, humanity, and cordiality. Such intercourse the Sabbath furnishes. So far as our social element requires the suspension of worldly pursuit, the Sabbath is adapted to the exigency. The conjugal, parental, and filial feelings are all improved by the observance of this day. Freed from the cares and labors of the week, the family collected around the social hearth, forms a circle in which the *tender and cheerful* feelings are enjoyed in the freshness of a new creation. In this enjoyment the peasant is equal to the monarch. With his children at his knees, and the partner of his cares by his side, he enjoys the day of rest no less refreshing to his heart than to his body.

Man's intellect also has wants which the Sabbatical institution can, to a great extent, meet. It has been questioned by some of the sages of modern times, whether the

human intellect is ever at rest. Suppose it *is* ever active—it certainly needs a change of activity. He who thinks constantly upon one subject or class of subjects, becomes a monomaniac on that subject, whether it be on money, acquisitions, gratification, or on any other *one* of the common interests of life. The day of rest, with its appropriate influences, is calculated to recover man from any *unbroken* influence that may have fascinated him. Ceasing from labor—frequenting the sanctuary—placing himself under efficient pulpit ministrations, he will be disenchanted from the sensualities of life, and furnished with new themes for his contemplation.

The regular recurrence of the Sabbath and the benignity of its character, are well adapted to induce a *preparation* to meet it. Cleanliness, cheerfulness, moral and intellectual improvement are the natural results of its appointment; the neat and proper arrangements of home—the quiet and cheerful aspects of the family, and the intercourse of congenial and tranquil minds, tend alike to the improvement of the understanding and the solace of the heart. Nor is this institution less adapted to the moral and spiritual wants of man. He is the repository of a religious element which will manifest itself, in some way, before its entire suppression *within him.* It will either manifest itself in blind superstition, wild fanaticism, or in enlightened scriptural piety. The Sabbath, the sanctuary, and earnest ministrations are great aids in its proper development. Now, an institution that stands so signally connected with the highest interests of society and the spiritual improvement of man, has undoubtedly a *moral* complexion, and must of necessity be included in a *complete* moral code, such as the decalogue, and is, therefore, like *all other moral laws, of abiding obligation!*

It is pertinent to this subject that I should say some-

thing in relation to the change of the day of rest from the seventh to the first day of the week.

The Saviour, in his intercourse with the Jews, avowed his Lordship over the Sabbath—"The Son of Man is Lord also of the Sabbath;" consequently we must look to him for authority for this change of the day. There are about five thousand of our fellow-professors of the Christian faith within the bounds of our Union, who do not recognize any authority for this transfer. In this respect, they are evidently *unique*. The considerations or arguments for the transfer are such as to command the acquiescence of the great majority of the Christian profession.

It seems to have been included in the prophecies relative to the promised Messiah, that his *rest*, in the original, his Sabbath, should be *glorious*. The Psalmist, predicting the rejection of Christ, and yet still becoming the head of the corner, as indeed he did by his resurrection from the dead, says, "This is the day which the *Lord has made*, we will be glad and rejoice in it." Ps. cxviii.

The language of these scriptures indicates a *new Sabbath, a day made by the Lord*—hence called the *Lord's day*. Accordingly our Lord made his disciples special visits on this day—on the first day he founded his church—on this day his disciples met for worship and acts of benevolence—on this day John, the apostle, "was in the spirit."

The fact of this transfer is also attested by the current of ecclesiastical history.

Ignatius, a companion of some of the apostles, says: "Let us no more Sabbatize, that is, keep the *seventh* day, but let us keep the Lord's day on which our Life arose." Justin Martyr, who lived at the close of the first and beginning of the second century, says: "On the day we call Sunday, is an assembly of all who live in the city or country and read the memoirs of the apostles, and the writings of the prophets are *read*." Irenæus, a disciple

of Polycarp, who was a disciple of John, and lived in the second century, affirms, that "on the *Lord's* day every one of us Christians keeps the *Sabbath*, meditating in the law, and rejoicing in the works of God." The list of witnesses on this subject might be extended, but I forbear.

In contemplating what our predecessors have transmitted to us, we come into contact with institutions and interests to which they attached no common importance. Some of these originated in the course of divine providence *from* the peculiar circumstances of the race; others were the direct and positive institutions of the Deity. In following these up the stream of time, we arrive at their respective origins—some running a little over eighteen hundred years into the past; others, fifteen hundred years beyond that period; but when we pursue the Sabbatical institution to its birth, we are brought within a few hours after the commencement of the race itself. Venerable institution! Can it be possible that as long as the Christian faith obtains in society, this shall ever be extinguished? It is too replete with blessings, too deeply rooted in the minds and hearts of the good and virtuous to be supplanted by any other *rest* day. The American family will have a day of rest, a day of relaxation, and so long as Christianity is cherished in its bosom, will the *Lord's day be that day!*

But, like all the blessings of a benign Providence, it can be abused and prostituted to ignoble and corrupting purposes. It can either be a curse or a blessing to this great nation; a *blessing*, if heeded according to its design; *curse*, if diverted from its legitimate use. At the least computation, there are *fifteen millions* within the boundaries of our Union, who have not come to their majority—who still need parental advice and control. Now, let these millions of youths be set at liberty every seven days, to *go* where they please, and *do* what they list, and who can estimate

the amount of evil induced by this hebdomedal or weekly relaxation?

From early habitual violations of this day have grown the most shocking enormities that have ever disturbed society. Adult violators of this day exert a most pernicious influence on this juvenile class. For every Sabbath-breaker, besides bringing ruin upon himself, impairs the moral principle of the community to which he belongs; and, of course, impairs the security, the life, and property, and character of that community—and multiplies temptation around every family—increasing the difficulties of a virtuous education, and the chances of destruction of the young.

On the contrary, bring these millions of plastic natures, every seven days, under wholesome Sunday school and pulpit instruction, and proper parental control, and you will evolve results whose value can not be told. In view of this, should I not charge every one of you, from the oldest and most influential down to the youngest and humblest of you, to value this sacred institution—to observe it acceptably, and to influence those who can be affected by your example to do the same. The honor of God, the prosperity of our common country, the diffusion of our holy religion, and the purity and well-being of the domestic circle, demand it.

SERMON XIII.

THE DAY OF SMALL THINGS.

BY THOMAS MUNNELL.

"The day of small things."—ZECH. IV, 12.

IT has been found more difficult, for centuries past, to ascertain and fix the exact length of a yard, for a unit of measure, than to determine the mile, the league, or even the periphery of the earth. The ingenuity of the inventives and the resources of the scientific, reinforced by the necessities of society ever since the world began, have all failed, till within the last fifty years, to construct a reliable yard-stick. There being no object in nature of a fixed, unalterable length, no accurate standard measure of kind could be found; hence mere approximations to correctness were used, such as the length of three grains of barley for an inch; three lengths of a man's foot, or the length of the king's arm for a yard. Even the use of the brass rods sanctioned by legislative enactment, and carefully kept for ages in the exchequer, gave no satisfaction to theoretic accuracy. So great has been the difficulty to be overcome, that the French had to elaborate the ten millionth part of a quadrant of a meridian of the earth, to obtain an unvarying "metre," or yard, for their use. And to this day no other means, except the pendulum system, has been invented or discovered for defining said measure.

The end gained at last might seem to be a "small thing" to cost so much time, labor and money, were it not that

all the fractions and multiples of the yard are then at our command—inches, feet, rods, furlongs, miles and leagues, by means of which we lay our lines accurately in all geometrical and astronomical distances. The day of small things was not despised by the learned, during the last two centuries, and now the surprising outgrowth and rich results of their work fully justifies all the labor bestowed in establishing a unit of measure.

It was also a small thing that in the beginning of the seventeenth century, a sexton in Pisa left the chandelier of a cathedral swinging in gentle oscillations from side to side; it was a very insignificant circumstance that Galileo stepped into the cathedral just at that time, and noticed the regularity of these oscillations; but when we remember that the now indispensable use of the pendulum as a measure, both for distance and for time, in all its scientific applications, was derived from those indifferent circumstances, we are warned not to despise the day of small things in religion, for our small beginnings heavenward while on earth may have such an outgrowth of bliss as to yield us many a happy hour throughout eternity.

There is, it must be admitted, an almost unconquerable tendency in our unbelieving hearts to underrate the real value of religion, because of the apparent littleness of its beginnings. As we all gravitate toward a life of sight, rather than toward a life of faith, and as in this life we see and feel but little of heaven, we are urged but feebly toward the spreading glories of the future. We enjoy but little love, peace and hope; our faith is weak; we have seen the beauty of holiness as exhibited only in God's imperfect children; we have merely tasted that the Lord is gracious; small things of this world being so near us, seem greater than heavenly things at so great a distance, and not remembering the unspeakable development these heavenly things are to manifest, growing like the Alps as

you approach them, we despise them. When like the natural man, we believe only what we can test by our senses, we resemble the ignorant of the land, who believe nothing of the revelations of the telescope, and content themselves with the notion that the sun, moon and stars are neither larger nor more numerous than they seem to be. But when, like the spiritual man, we believe more than we can see, we resemble the astronomer who not only counts the hundred million of fixed stars, and measures the distance to some of them, but determines the orbits, periods of revolution and number of pounds in every planet in the solar system. The ignorant are satisfied with very unworthy conceptions of God's universe, or of what a single star really is; but oh! the wealth of the "morning star" which the Lord will give to him that overcometh—the little twinkler is found to be a magnificent world.

We shall now endeavor, *first, to illuminate this subject by various illustrations drawn from history and science;* and secondly, *we shall apply the truth thus embodied, to our religious life*, and may God grant the glow and unction of His holy presence while we speak!

The words of the text were uttered by the prophet in view of the small beginnings made by the Jews in re-building their temple after their return from Babylon. Although they "rejoiced to see the plummet in the hands of Zerubbabel," the opposition of the enemy and their own weakness afforded them no very flattering prospects. Sanballet despised "these feeble Jews." They said, "If a fox go up, he shall break down their stone wall." Nehemiah says, "They laughed us to scorn and despised us;" and even the "ancient men" of the Jews, when they saw this foundation and thought of the glory of the former temple, lifted up their voices and "wept" aloud. Yet the prophet believed that God would strengthen them and enlarge the temple from these small beginnings, from which we can

draw the moral in a Christian sense, that we are not to "despise the day of small things."

1. As we can have no sensible illustrations drawn upon lines running from time into eternity, we must be contented with those expressed in integers of earth. Tracing the development of things, before they leap the life of time, every indication seems to promise an incalculable growth beyond our lives. The ratios that seem to be established between actions, both good and bad, and their final results here, all combine to promise the righteous, and threaten the wicked with an increase in geometrical ratios hereafter. How the hearts of God's people have been rejoiced to see the spreading influence of the Gospel of Christ, originating in very feeble efforts, put forth by the church. The first collection taken up for the evangelization of the heathen, amounted to £13 2*s*. 6*d*. This was a day of small things, but God and Dr. Wm. Carey meant it should not be despised. Before Carey died, he had been the chief agent in issuing, from the Serampore press, 212,000 volumes, in forty different languages, all ready for perusal by a population of 270,000,000 of human beings; volumes, embracing bibles, testaments, hymn books and tracts, grammars and dictionaries of more than twenty of these languages. These few pounds sterling, amounting to about $65 in all, have grown exceedingly since that day. Scores of Missionary Societies have been organized and operated successfully, contributing their millions every year. The Wesleyan Society alone, for years, has contributed over $500,000 per annum to foreign missions, sanctifying almost every ship that left English ports for distant parts of the world, with a contribution of some kind to the benighted heathen. At first they traveled on commercial ships to the various stations of their labor; then was built a missionary ship, named "John Wesley," to which four or five others are said to have been added,

all of which are borne by the breath of the Lord over the deep, laden with the bread of life, and the water of life. And is it not possible that ere another century, the navy of Jesus Christ shall spread her peaceful canvass on every sea? Oh happy fleet! filled with the bread of life! let heaven's friendliest breezes fill the sails!

And will the small influence, operated by Carey, cease to be felt when the angel of God shall come with wing on land and wing on sea to shout the end of time? Will it not rather leap the limits of this life, and gladden the city of God? Will the song that rose from heathen lips in Bengal, die with their death? or will they make all heaven tremble with their joyful, ringing glory? Look to the Amazon for an answer. On the eastern side of the Andes, issues a little rivulet—an ox could drink it dry, and wait for more. Follow it a hundred miles, and you find it draining millions of acres—another hundred, and it is a magnificent stream, capable of bearing the commerce of the country. Now, stand within a hundred miles of its mouth and tell us, has the mountain rill come to naught? You are now in the "frith," or arm of the sea, and can scarcely tell whether it is river or sea; the river seems to become a sea, and to make common cause with the ever trobbing and impulsive deep! Now turn your eyes to that first heathen whom Carey converted. It was a day of small things. It was nothing, but a poor ignorant heathen, whose breast rose and fell. He heard, he believed, he trembled and loved. He that supports the bruised reed, blessed and strengthened him. He heard more, he understood more, loved more; his passions were reduced, his habits corrected, his life still elevated. The current of his spiritual being became still stronger, as new accessions of hope and love flowed in to impart additional momentum to his heavenward march. And is the current of such a life lost in death, or does the frith of his being spread out into

eternal life, and make common cause with heaven? Lift up your eyes to God's right hand. Do you see that justified spirit there? His robes have been washed in the blood of the Lamb. He is as immaculate as an angel. Jesus claims him—he scarcely knows what to do with all his joys. He is bright and tuneful as a seraph, while gladness swells in every note of the anthems of his salvation. Nor is he alone, for a great company from Bengal are there. Who are these, and whence come they? These are Carey's converts, for the arduous enterprize of whose salvation, he had no earthly encouragement, save those few dollars contributed by a brotherhood, who did not despise the day of small things.

Let us ask the scientific world for a confirmation of our hopes of expanding glory. It is said in the books, that the invention of the telescope had its origin in a very trifling circumstance. A spectacle maker, John Lepfrenshey, in Middleberg, seems to have had his glasses lying carelessly over his benches, when his playful little children accidently putting two concave surfaces together over some letters from a book, observed the magnified characters beneath. The father's attention was called to it, the philosophers heard of it, experiments were tried, and in 1609 the famous Galileo had constructed a telescope that magnified three times. He worked on, and before the close of the same year, he was looking at the moons of Jupiter! The subsequent triumphs of this broad eye, almost divine, need not be here detailed. The surprising faculties of the telescope were reinforced almost every year by some one, until the work was completed by the construction of Lord Ross' mammoth instrument, fifty-six feet long, the diameter of the tube seven feet, and that of the spectrum six feet, and at a cost of $60,000. The result of this grand achievement, in exploring the upper depths, in discovering unheard-of wonders, and in resolving nebulæ, is enough

to astonish angels. Yet, how small its beginning—beginning only, but beginnings of astronomical wonders that eye had not seen, nor ear heard, and that the heart can yet scarcely conceive.

And may not some apparently insignificant incident in the religious department ultimate in results as full and surprising? See Luther in a convent finding a Bible chained to a post like a felon! he opens and reads—"*The just shall live by faith.*" That's all. A short sentence. Who cared for it? or once supposed that a match was then applied to the whole magazine of popish error? who could have predicted the breaking of the bands of spiritual tyranny that had harnessed down the souls of millions and millions for centuries past? who understood this to be the chief figure in the calculation of Jehovah's forces that were to enfranchise Europe, free the cities, destroy feudalism, start commerce, revive literature, liberate the Bible, consume the "man of sin," and dispel the Bœotian clouds that had invested the world for ages? It is not claimed that these regenerating forces were all initiated by that discovery of the Bible, for paper had been made, printing invented, and the revival of literature had begun prior to this event, but Luther was God's engineer to let on the steam—to make the already polished enginery move, and to put all the other influences at work in the right direction. The resurrection of learning served to give us an accurate text; the manufacture of paper, and the art of printing, put into convenient form, while the newly opened commerce between the nations, carried the gospel to those in the region and shadow of death. Without the Bible, all the other forces would have failed of any permanent good results. Luther had a dream. He thought he was writing —that his long pen reached from Wurtemburg to Rome, and knocked off the pope's hat. That dream was significant, for it was neither the literary, the scientific, nor the

commercial forces that has reduced the pope's temporal dominions to the size of a couple of American counties, so much as the divine truths that flowed from that long pen.

If we pursue the results of this small beginning no further than this life, we may see what treasures God has *laid up* for them that love him. He that saw Nathaniel under the fig-tree, saw Luther in the convent, tapping the fountain of living waters. Only a few drops were obtained at first, but the clouds that were full of mercy soon did break in refreshing showers from above, and filled the Melancthons, and Zwingles, and Calvins, and Whitfields, and Wesleys, and many others no less notable in the kingdom of God—all of whom have been God's aqueducts, through whom the world has been supplied with the waters of life. Shall we attempt to follow them over Jordan? No, no. Let faith, and not language, nor even imagination, mark the progress of the world over them, and learn not to despise the day of small things here. Let the saints in glory hymn it; let the angels wonder at it, while eternity alone can tell it. Every heartfelt joy in heaven tells more than a sermon; every remembrance of redemption's blessed work, more than the volumes of all history; and then their future!—it bankrupts every vocabulary and all human imagery—

"Could we with ink the ocean fill,
And were the skies of parchment made,
Were every stock on earth a quill,
And every man a scribe by trade;
To write the love of God for man
Would drain the ocean dry;
Nor would the scroll contain the whole
If stretched from sky to sky."

Similar illustrations, to an indefinite number might be added, did the subject require further elucidation in this way. The boy that first learned to fly a kite, knew not

that he was taking the initial steps to all our telegraphic triumphs. The kite enabled Dr. Franklin to communicate with the lightning in the clouds. He then invented the lightning rod; and this in turn suggested the possibility of transmitting electricity along a horizontal wire. Steam has an expansive force equal to 2160 lbs on every square inch of the piston—a power that God had laid up in nature, waiting for such necessities in society as would call it forth. We had often had hints of this power, but never took the hint till some one noticed the clapping of the lid of a boiling vessel while the steam was escaping. As to the inexpressible development both of steam and electricity from beginnings so small, let silence be our eloquence, and let all be admonished by the voice of God in nature, not to "despise the day of small things."

II. One of the highest uses to which the subject, as thus illuminated, may be made subservient is the encouragement it affords to feeble saints, whose humility of mind tends to undervalue too much the worth of their own labor in the kingdom of God. Some Christians have an overwhelming sense of the greatness and holiness of God—of their own worthlessness and almost nothingness in his sight, and of how little they do, or can do, in comparison with many a hero of the cross, who, sailing through seas of blood, passed on to reach the crown. They think of the weakness of their heavenward affections, and of the alloy to be found in all their good works; of the many opportunities they miss for doing good; of the unsubduedness of their carnal passions, and of their general unlikeness to Jesus Christ. Such saints should take courage and remember that Abraham and Isaac and Jacob were as far down in the scale of holiness once as themselves; that "Jacob's ladder" has children of God standing on every round from heaven to earth; that from the spirits of the just made perfect down to the last cannibal converted,

God's image is more or less distinctly photographed upon every soul; that an infant is as really a son, and shares as largely in the affections of the Father, as do the oldest and strongest sons of the family. It is not so important to know how old a child of God you are, as to be assured that you are a legitimate son; the question is not *how far* have you traveled on your way to heaven? but *which way are you going?* If you are a child at all, remember what a child may become. Dr. Franklin once, illustrating a similar subject, asked, "What is the use of an infant?" Do you despise such an incapable? Let forty years transpire, and lo! it has become a Copernicus, a Newton, or a Leverier, locating a sun or a planet, or eliminating by mathematical reasonings the laws that govern their motions. What is the use of an infant son of God? It is very feeble; has need of milk; can not walk alone; very ignorant; can do but little service, and that very imperfectly, and has Christ's likeness very indistinctly daguerreotyped upon his soul. But let a thousand years transpire, and you may see him in the glory of an angel and the mein of a God, looking out with more than telescopic vision, from the observatory of the New Jerusalem, for the little planet where all his giant powers were born. Do not, then, despise the day of small beginnings of your Christian life. Your love may be a feeble flame, but if it still be fed from the fountain of love, you 'll, another day, understand how great a matter a little fire kindleth. "They that be wise shall shine as the brightness of the firmament, and they that turn many to righteousness, as the stars forever and ever." Even if your love be like smoking flax, Jesus will not quench it, but will encourage it, and breathe it into a seraph flame, for

"Weak as you are, you shall not faint,
Or fainting, shall not die;
Jesus, the strength of every saint,
Will aid you from on high."

Let not your personal insignificance, then, nor the feebleness of the inner man destroy the confidence of your hope. Nor should a distressing sense of the meagerness of your service discourage you, as long as you are conscious of trying to serve God. It is true, that owing to the brevity of our lives and the infirmities of our natures, we do not and can not do much this side of heaven. But shall we neglect or despise that little? It was a small thing for the righteous named in Matthew, twenty-fifth chapter, to have fed one of Christ's disciples, but God is not unrighteous to forget such things. "I was hungry, and ye fed me," paid them ten thousand times. The day of "giving a cup of cold water," is a day of small things; but it will be a day of great things, when Jesus will say, "I was thirsty, and ye gave me drink." It will be surprising to hear Him say, "I was a stranger, and ye took me in," and no less surprising to learn that all this honor originated in our having afforded an ordinary entertainment to a disciple while on earth

Perhaps no class of Christians needs this exhortation more than ministers of the gospel, whose labors often appear so fruitless. Sinners are hardened, the church often ungrateful for the most self-sacrificing devotion to her true interests, or fail to appreciate the right kind of labor. Sometimes we fail in our pulpit efforts, and go home discouraged; sometimes our minds and hearts are distressingly barren of appropriate thoughts, and destitute of that unction that makes us feel we are doing some good. The preacher of a finely organized, sensitive nature, is subject to depressions from very slight causes—he has failed in selecting an appropriate subject for the occasion; or being a little excited at the beginning of his sermon, has pitched his voice too high, and, unable to gain his natural key, he labors on through his discourse, making it too long, in trying to hide his failure; then, feeling conscious that the

people were not edified, retires, mortified, from the pulpit, and wonders if he has not mistaken his calling. Sometimes he preaches through a whole fortnight in a protracted effort, and sees little if any good results—he can neither rouse the church nor the world, and the brethren, measuring the good done, by the number converted, consider him a poor preacher, and pay him—at that rate. In warm weather, the mercury always rises in the thermometer, and falls when it is cold; and how often the conscientious, but sensitive preacher, feels a depression of all that is mercurial in his nature, under the chilly circumstances referred to.

Young ministers especially are subject to these trials, though every true minister of Christ knows that these lines are no strangers to his own heart—every *true* minister, I say; for there may be public talkers who are strangers to all these things, who never experienced any travail of soul for the church or the world, and who do not "naturally care for these things," because, like Judas, they are "going to their own place." Even when we may have been successful in our labors in the kingdom of God, how painfully conscious we often are of our inability and nothingness; of our dull, cheap diction, and of our thick-tongued utterances; of the scarcity of love, and of the paucity of self-sacrificing deeds of devotion, and exclaim with Paul, "Who is sufficient for these things?" It is said, that when Handel was composing his celebrated "Oratorio of Creation," he never went to the piano to add a few more notes to the mighty strains, without praying God that he might "*praise Him worthily!*" This bespeaks for the great musician at once a high conception of the worthiness of Jehovah's name, and of his own unpreparedness to do justice to so lofty a theme. And what *pious* minister has ever undertaken to be a representative of Jesus Christ before a multitude, without experiencing a kindred feeling, filling his soul with a sense of the mag-

nitude of his task? "How shall I my Saviour set forth?" is the leading inquiry of his burdened heart. He is taking up a mountain in his arms—to be apprehended in part, but not comprehended. It was with this view of the work of the ministry, that Whitfield is said by his biographers always to have spent one or two hours in prayer, meditation and communion with God, before ever he would come out on any important occasion to preach. This was the chief source of his almost divine power in the pulpit; for, having been up into the mount, as Moses was talking with God about the salvation of Israel, and praying that he might preach him worthily—being greatly strengthened in the inner man, he came right out from the presence of the Most High, into the presence of the people, and no wonder then the flowing tears of penitence made their white way down the dusty colliers' cheeks. Oh! if we all would pray before preaching, as Whitfield prayed, how few and light would be our seasons of depression, and how greatly our powers of vision, in regard to the outgrowth of our feeble efforts, would be increased. Let no good preacher be discouraged; remember that the spirits of all the just made perfect, are saved by the ministry of the word that was preached in the day of small things. The twelve apostles of the Lamb were saved by preaching; it still pleases God to save men by the same "foolish" instrumentality, and the last man redeemed by blood, whose first song of thanksgiving shall mingle with the voice of the angel calling the world to judgment, shall be saved by the voice of some feeble minister of Christ.

It is a disregard of the principle suggested in our text, that causes the sinner to think he will not be held responsible for all his little acts of disobedience. He sees but little difference between the morality of his life and that of the Christian, and asks, How can differences so small issue in results so unlike as heaven and hell? Should we

admit the premises, that but little difference exists between the forgiven and the unforgiven, still, who dare despise that little? Two lines may be almost parallel, diverging from each other but a little. Project these one mile, and the hairbreath divergence has grown to a separation of inches, feet, or yards. Run them forward a hundred miles, and they will be miles apart. Now let them be projected on to infinity, and who can tell the divergence? Or two men are standing together on the equator—the one facing the beauteous east, the other the darkening west. They are not far apart at the start, but they go in different directions, and in time will be asunder as far "as the east is from the west!" The difference between the Christian and the moralist, is confessedly not as great on earth as we could desire, but great eternity will widen the distance in a fearful manner. It seems a small thing to believe on the Son of God, yet "He that believeth on Him hath everlasting life"—life merely begun, it is true, and very feeble in its demonstrations, but never to have an end.

The infidel despises the feeble confessor before men; soon that timid sinner proclaims the name of Jesus boldly in the great congregation, calls upon him in all his deep distresses, rejoices in death, triumphs in the day of judgment, joins the spirits of the just made perfect, and fills his place in the orchestra of heaven. The penitent believer is baptized in the water—the scoffer scoffs; the skeptic sees no use in the dripping humiliation; it is a small thing, perhaps, to be planted in the likeness of Christ's death, but it will be no small thing to be in the likeness of his resurrection. Let the sinner lay hold of the little God offers now; taste and see if the Lord is gracious, and if you relish the *taste* of heavenly rest, God will let you bathe your wearied soul in the Pacific Ocean of his love.

Lest the sinner who may read these lines may not be

suitably impressed with the thought before us, one other illustration shall be here introduced. In the village of R———, State of Ohio, the court house stands on the cone of a ridge, from which the country slopes off in opposite directions. The rains that fall on one side of the roof are conveyed into a little stream that empties into the Cuyahoga river; this river falls into Lake Erie, thence over the Niagara cataract into Lake Ontario, and so on out into the Gulf of St. Lawrence, in the North. The waters that fall on the other side of the roof, run by a small branch into the Mahoning river, thence into the Ohio and Mississippi, down into the Gulf of Mexico, in the South. Now, it happened that two contiguous drops were coming down in parallel lines only a few inches apart, but fell upon different sides of the cone of that roof, and for that little difference at the start, they were obliged to separate forever—the one to be chilled and frozen among icebergs in the North; the other to sparkle in the smiles of a beamy South. But a stranger thing than this once happened there. Two drops leaving the clouds very near to each other, were, by mutual attraction in their way down, mingled into one; falling together upon the very edge of the cone, half went this way, and half that. Separated forever—how different their history now—they were on different sides of the line, from which little circumstance issued all the difference of their experience forever. Shall I pause to make the application? May God impress the solemn truth upon every heart! Even a husband and wife attracted like kindred drops into one, have walked together down life's journey—the one is a Christian, the other disregards this small difference; they die; the one is scarcely saved, it is true, yet she fell on the right side; the other was almost a Christian, but fell on the wrong side—apparently a small matter at the start, but ere the cycles of eternity shall cease their revolutions, the *zenith* and the

nadir shall alone be able to articulate the ineffable results of despising, or even neglecting religion in the day of its feeble beginnings. Who can or who dare despise it? Who will hazard his salvation on such a delusion? All men are *for* Christ, or *against* Him, on land or on water, there being no edge of neutral ground for the sole of the foot.

Oh! child of God, have you ever been tempted to give up your birthright? Esau was profane, but you would be foolish to sell your possessions, for they will bring but a poor price at best in a market that has nothing but the lusts of the flesh, the lusts of the eyes, and the pride of life to barter with. The field you own contains the "pearl of great price." The most valuable diamond known on earth, now worn by England's worthy queen, and estimated at two million pounds sterling, was picked up in Golconda by a poor peasant, and sold for a trifle. Poor fellow! had he but known its value. He was pitied for his ignorance. Don't sell your field in Golconda, for any of the counterfeit hopes and mock joys of a bankrupt world. True, you may feel yourself to be a poor, weak and imperfect creature, with no righteousness of your own—well—

> "A guilty, weak and helpless worm,
> On Christ's kind arms just fall:
> He is your strength and righteousness,
> Your Saviour and your all."

Draw nigh to God. The nearer you live to him in prayer and praise, the more irresistible will be the gravitation of all your desires heavenward. Let your prayer be—

> "Nearer my God to thee,
> Though it be a cross that raiseth me
> Still all my song shall be,
> Nearer my God to thee."

"And now, unto Him that is able to do exceeding abundantly, *above all that we ask or think*, according to the power that worketh in us, unto Him be glory in the Church, by Christ Jesus, throughout all ages, world without end." *Amen.*

SERMON XIV.

THE FIRST AND SECOND ADAM.

BY O. A. BURGESS.

No two words in any language can more perfectly sum up all the hopes and fears of man than the words Life and Death. Upon a proper understanding of these words will depend very much, if not, indeed, all that may be hoped in the one, or feared in the other. We live—we die. So much is certain. Shall we live again—shall we die again? are the most momentous questions ever propounded to a living being. God only can answer them. Has he done it? Has he lifted the curtain of the future, and permitted man to look within? If so, then all must be plain. If, not, then an impenetrable cloud vails the horizon of man, and broods like an incubus over his uncertain destiny. The voice of God in revelation comes to our relief. We listen—we hear, we believe and rejoice. The cloud is lifted away. The light appears: radiating from the pages of God's book, the rays of that light reach the abodes of death, and life and immortality are born from the grave. To catch at least a partial glimpse of that glorious light, let us begin "in the beginning."

THE FIRST ADAM.

To the first Adam, it was said: "Of every tree of the garden thou mayest freely eat: but of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, thou shalt not eat of it, for in the day thou eatest thereof, thou shalt surely die." Gen. ii, 16, 17. The first question which relates to the subject

just here is, did Adam die "in the day" of his eating of the forbidden tree? If not "in the day," when did he die; and in either case, what was the nature of his death? In the very outset, the grave error may be committed, of differing from distinguished critics upon the passage of scripture above quoted. It will, however, be assumed, both that it is correctly translated, and that Adam did die in the self same day he transgressed the command of God.

Thou shalt surely die; to die thou shalt die; in dying thou shalt die; these three are the most important translations of the Hebrew words, מות תמות. It has already been assumed that the first is correct. In confirmation of this, the critical reader is referred to such scriptures, as Gen. iii, 4; xx, 7; I Samuel xix, 39–44; II Samuel, xii, 14; for the further examination of the original text. In these it will be found that, shall surely die, or be put to death, gives the exact meaning of the two Hebrew words above quoted; and that the two words are used simply to emphasize or intensify the meaning, is a statement, the truth of which can hardly be called in question; and that the rendering given, "surely die," is, therefore, correct, admits of little or no doubt. Indeed, it is doubtless true, that the only reason for attempting another translation, is found in the assumed position that Adam did not die "in the day" of his eating of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil; and busy theologians, ever ready to supply God's omissions—correct his errors, and reconcile his discrepancies, are willing to do so in this case, by showing that he did not mean for Adam to die in the special day of his transgression, but nearly a thousand years afterward. *In the day thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die.* No labored translation, no torturing of terms can turn away the directness and expressness of this de-

claration; and all who believe God's word, must take it for granted that he will perform whatever he proposes.

It ought, therefore, to occur to us, not so much to be seeking to prove that Adam outlived God's decree, by more than nine hundred years, as to be endeavoring to learn what was meant by death. Permit the question, then, what is death? It may not be supposed that God meant anything differently of death, when he addressed the first man of creation, than he will mean when he addresses the last. Between these extremes of human existence he has not failed to remove all doubt as to what he means by death. Man may, indeed, philosophize, doubt, disbelieve and reject; but the true definition of all terms which reach into the future, will never be grasped by the philosophies of men. Such definitions must be revealed. God does this. The definition of death stands thus: God's word is law; the transgression of that law is sin; the wages of sin are death. Thus we have, if not the very nature of death, at least, the means producing, and the times when produced; hence the declaration of the Apostle Paul—dead in trespasses and in sins. It is contrary to every imaginable principle of divine law, to suppose a man may commit sin, and that sin take no effect upon him until a hundred or a thousand years afterward. True, in the sense of a full and final penalty, a murderer might go unpunished all his life, and be none the less a murderer, being at the same and all the time dead in sin. The scriptures thus regard men dead in, or by, sin *now*—dead now—dead while living; so there must be something more of death attaching to man than the death of the body; and if attaching to man, it attached to Adam. We call this moral or spiritual death. When does man die this death? Undoubted when, just when he sins. When did Adam die this death? When he sinned, which was when he ate of the forbidden fruit. It came to pass to him,

therefore, as God said it would; for "in the day" he ate of that fruit, he became a transgressor of the law, and, therefore, dead in or by sin.

A question may now arise with regard to that other death which occurred when Adam was nine hundred and thirty years old. This is called a physical, or more commonly, a temporal death. To understand this death, we must recall to our memories a certain other *tree* in the garden of Eden, besides the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. This was the tree of life. It came to pass *after* Adam sinned, that God drove him away from this tree. The reason for so doing can best be given in his own words: And the Lord God said: Behold the man is become as one of us to know good and evil: and now lest he put forth his hand and take also of the tree of life, and eat and live forever: Therefore the Lord God sent him forth from the garden of Eden, to till the ground, from whence he was taken. So he drove out the man; and he placed at the east of the garden of Eden, cherubim and a flaming sword which turned every way, to keep the way of the tree of life. Gen. iii, 22–24. From this it is evident that Adam's death by sin, as previously shown, was only incidental to, and by no means the direct cause of, the death of his body nine hundred and thirty years afterward. If just here a proper distinction be observed between primary and secondary causes, it may be safely affirmed, that if Adam, although a sinner, already dead by sin, had been permitted free access to the tree of life, he would have been upon the earth until this day; and as to that matter, all his offspring also, if they too had had access to the same tree. In this respect, that tree of life was the great prototype of the future tree, whose leaves are for the healing of the nations, and of whose fruit those who eat shall never hunger—never die.

Let the attention of the reader next be turned to the

effect of Adam's transgression and death, or as it is usually designated, ADAM'S FALL.

In childhood's days we were poetically taught that—

> In Adam's fall
> We sinnéd all,

which may be made of very good poetry, but of very questionable theology. It is a common principle of justice that men should be held responsible only for their own deeds. Human law recognizes this principle, and it is deeply felt that divine law ought to. If to make the innocent suffer for, instead of, the guilty, can ever become a law, it can only do so by the absolute enactment of Him who has the right to command all things. It will be very difficult, moreover, to find anywhere in the dealings of God with his creature man, a single act which sets aside this great principle. It may be argued that Christ suffered —the innocent for the guilty. If this be admitted in the widest range claimed for it, the main question will not be changed, as this would come under the head of the decree of God, an exception to the rule, already conceded. But view it in whatever light possible, there must be admitted a vast difference, in the principle under consideration, when applied to the son of man on the one hand, or the Son of God on the other. Common theology—that is, orthodoxy —utterly disregards all these things, and demands the death of all the world, in Adam. Not simply the death of the body, but the moral or spiritual death; thus making all men spiritually dead at birth, before a single volition or a single deed. Such theology is not only adapted to, but is directly the parent of, the doctrine of universal salvation. The argument from such premises is very brief and pointed; it says: we lost all things in the first Adam, without any volition—any act—any knowledge or consent of our own; and therefore, in a similar manner, we ought to gain all

things in Christ, the second Adam; that as sin and death came by the first Adam, without any faith in us, or deed by us, so in like manner ought pardon and life to come by the second Adam. That the Universalist builds a very plausible argument here, must certainly be admitted; and it might be a very curious question to know how the orthodox would refute it, having not simply yielded the premises, but absolutely being the authors of them. The question is, however, very easily answered, when it is remembered, as already shown, that Adam died his moral death for himself, and for no one else. Universalism is one extreme of error growing out of the falsely assumed relations of the human family to the first Adam. There is another extreme already alluded to. This is usually styled original sin, total depravity, etc. By original sin is meant that which was transferred by Adam to his posterity. By total depravity it is affirmed that children are born into the world with their moral natures corrupt, totally corrupt at birth, on account of their parents' sins before them. The legitimate outgrowth of this doctrine very naturally is, that a miracle nothing less than the one whose fiat first created man, can ever re-create him; and that this miracle of re-creation, or regeneration will only apply to the blessed few called the "elect," while all the rest of mankind are, and must forever be, hopelessly lost. In the midst of such wide extremes, we may well pause, return from the tangents upon which human speculations have thrown us, and examine anew our latitude and departure in the great moral field before us.

What lost the world, then, in the first Adam? Unquestionably, simply the physical or temporal life. Did his fall not affect our moral or spiritual natures? Certainly not; else we should be sinners upon his responsibility and not our own. Adam sinned for himself; we sin for ourselves. Besides, it must be remembered that Adam had

precisely the same nature before he sinned as after; in other words, he was just as "sinful by nature" before he ate the forbidden fruit, as after; so that if the offspring of Adam are "sinful by nature," they are no more so than he was before he sinned. Hence the most that can be said against poor father Adam is, that he saved some one of his sons the trouble of eating of that tree by which the knowledge of good and evil was brought into the world; mark well, the scriptures do not say good and evil, but the *knowledge* of good and evil. Good and evil being in the world, it matters little by what particular man a knowledge of those qualities is obtained; for it is not the knowledge of good and evil, but the partaking of the evil instead of the good, which constitutes the sin; and every man who to-day does evil, commits sin precisely as Adam did, and will be held in the same degree individually responsible for it. So, then, every one of us shall give account of himself to God. Romans xiv, 12. Now, sin is the transgression of the law; where, therefore, there is no law, there can be no transgression. But the simple existence of the law is not enough. Other things are requisite. There must be persons to whom the law is addressed. This implies that the persons addressed are capable of understanding the law before it can become effective, or they transgressors. It is evident thence that no moral act of Adam could affect his unborn offspring, since his act only became a moral one by his personal contact with a law which he fully understood. That contact involved volition, and that volition determined the quality of the deed. Hence it is, our Saviour accused certain men of specific crimes, because the simple look of the eye indicated their volition, though the deed itself had not been committed. From the foregoing principles, it may be safely concluded that Adam's sin, in a moral point of view, affected only himself; and that the next man was under

no more obligation or necessity to sin because his father sinned, than are we because our fathers sinned. Nor was the second man any more naturally inclined to sin than the first; so that if total depravity, or any *inherent* depravity, existed at all, it existed as much in Adam as in any of his sons. But we have already seen that Adam died a moral death by deliberately violating a known law of God; and that he died that death *in the day* he violated that law; from whence we conclude that men in all ages, and men to-day die the moral death, when, like Adam, they violate a known law of God. Children are thus relieved from any imputation of sin until they have arrived at an age sufficient to enable them to discern between good and evil; nor are they then sinners until they partake of the evil along with, or instead of, the good. Previous to this, they stand in precisely the same moral position occupied by Adam before he sinned. But when, like him, they hear a law of God—know it to be of God—yet violate it, that moment they become transgressors, and that moment, therefore, they die the moral death. Hence the decree is the same upon all men as upon Adam: In the day thou eatest thereof, thou shalt surely die.

The truth that God has included all under sin, does by no means prove that all are by necessity sinners; for the very same decree which causes death to reign from Adam till Moses, plainly declares that it reigned over those who had not sinned after the similitude of Adam's transgression. The scriptures, moreover, in declaring that death had passed upon all men, predicate it upon the alleged fact that all had sinned; yet, by the very definition of sin given by the same apostle, it is evident beyond dispute that he only included those capable of sinning. When, for example, our Saviour gives to his apostles the great Gospel commission, he says: "He that believeth not shall be damned;" now, it is not to be supposed for a mo-

ment that those incapable of believing are to be damned, but only those who, hearing and understanding, refused to believe. Thus it will appear in all the generalizations of the truths of scripture, that there are certain specific principles which limit and define their application, so as to leave no doubt in the mind of the careful observer as to the person or persons included therein.

With these principles applied, nothing can be more foreign to the true intent of scripture, than that sweeping dogma of the current theology, which places the whole human family in one class, and imputes sin to the infant the moment it breathes the breath of life. Church polities, built upon such foundations, can not but be very grave errors, and if errors, of human and not divine origin. Nor are the advocates of such theories willing to abide the decision of the inexorable logic of their premises, and hence do not like to be reminded of their hard-hearted fathers who declared there were "infants in hell not a span long."

From what has thus far been presented, it is plain enough that the world sustains a two-fold relation to the first Adam—the moral and physical. Concerning the latter it may be proper further to remark, that in it are we necessarily affected by Adam's transgression; and in this respect only is it, that "in Adam all die." This is the death also which is brought upon us without our knowledge or consent. It is a death, too, having no particular relation to the moral death; for if a man be pure as an angel, he must die; the most wicked man dies also. Enough has been said for the present concerning the two-fold relation —moral and physical—to the first Adam, and the two-fold death—moral and physical—growing out of those relations. They will, however, necessarily come up again in another point of view, when we come to consider our two-fold relation to the second Adam, and our two-fold life growing out

of those relations. Before, however, doing this, permit a few general reflections upon the principles before us.

Not only has "total depravity" become a current phrase, molded into church doctrines, but other phrases also, such as "natural tendency to evil," "inherent wickedness," "preponderance of evil passions," etc., all of which go to show the widely-spread impression, that all the evil in the world is within man—born within him, and only awaits the growth of a child a little ways to appear in all its native corruptness. Upon this hypothesis, all evil is inherent, and like the seed of the earth, springs spontaneously forth, needing no collateral forces to cultivate or develop. Dependent upon, and directed by, no forces from without, it only needs to be let alone in order to grow and ripen into a most luxuriant harvest of sin and death. From such premises the conclusion would not be very remote, that God is alike the author of good and evil, precisely what some men have assumed and endeavored to maintain. Further, it would also seem that if all the powers for evil are within, so must also the powers for good be within; both thereby being made independent of all outside forces. This entirely nullifies the question of moral action, and, therefore, of responsibility to God. It destroys the entire theory of vice in one act, or virtue in another, and simply leaves a man to work out his own destiny according to the impulses within, whether they are good or evil. Nor are we in this particular lacking men who assume just such positions, and endeavor to maintain that there is no such thing as a moral quality to an action; thus giving to man the absolute right to do whatsoever seemeth good in his own eyes.

Per contra to all this, nothing is more clearly set forth in the scriptures than that there are outside forces working upon and superadded to the forces within man. These are designated spiritual powers or forces. Satan is de-

clared to be the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience. Christ is called the Lord, or prince of glory, and gives his Spirit to all who obey him. Satan has a kingdom and subjects. Christ has a kingdom and subjects. These subjects pass from one kingdom to the other, as of certain men Paul declared they had been delivered from the power of darkness and translated into the kingdom of God's dear Son. With Satan and his hosts on the one hand, and Christ with his word and his Spirit on the other, man becomes the object of the contest; life or death the issue; heaven or hell the destiny. The one appeals to all the evil passions, and arouses those passions by promising the immediate reward of sensual gratification; the other is obliged to say, Deny thyself and bear the cross. The former can offer the glitter of gold, the pomp of power, and the luring homage of human tongues; while the latter points beyond the flattering lips and false hearts of earth—beyond even the grave itself, to a glory brighter than the sun and enduring as eternity. Satan will give death as the ultimate and eternal wages of sin; Christ will give eternal life as the reward of righteousness. These are the motive powers—the forces from without which constantly operate upon man, and which give, as the one or the other may prevail, the preponderance to virtue or to vice.

Men are apt to seek excuses for their own mistakes and follies. Adam blamed his wife, she the serpent, and God cursed them all. Men of to-day act upon the same principle. Theology must have foundation. Theologians therefore decide that all wickedness is inherent, inborn. The serpent of Eden, is the infant of to-day! why not? the infant can not defend itself, and like the chloroformed victim can be cut into as many pieces of depravity as will suit the taste of the most fastidious of all the doctors (of divinity). It is possible that a grave objection to these

principles will be encountered in the generally conceded truth, that there is more wickedness than goodness in the world; that Satan's empire is larger than Christ's. If this be granted, it can be accounted for. It has not been for a moment supposed, when speaking of the outside or spiritual forces brought to bear upon man, that he himself should remain passive. On the contrary, all his powers are put under tribute, and in the midst of the contest, he by his own will determines whether virtue or vice shall prevail—whether Christ or Satan shall conquer. In this view only is it possible for man to be, or to become, morally responsible for his deeds. Human agency is both primary and secondary; both subjective and objective. Man retires within himself, and subjectively determines every moral question. That determination takes its effect objectively, and other men feel the influence. In this will be found the solution of the alleged fact, that if goodness abounds, wickedness superabounds. Take, for example, your own son. You live in a village or city. Your boy is upon the streets during his waking hours, say three fourths of his time. That time is mostly spent in the company of older boys who have learned wickedness from their seniors. Your boy learns to smoke cigars and chew tobacco; learns to lie; learns to swear; learns to dispute and quarrel; learns to get drunk; learns—mark well, *learns*, all these things have to be learned—in short, learns all the habits which disgrace and destroy. The other one fourth of the time your child is in the house, and, possibly, immediately under your own eye; but, then, you have office work or household cares, so that a small portion of that time is given to the actual instruction of your child; but if all of it be given, even then your son is in the school of Satan three hours for every one he is in the school of Christ. You become alarmed in due time, and wonder why he *is* such a bad boy. You perhaps summon your minister to

your aid, who gravely tells you in scholastic terms, "it was born within him." You heave a deep and pensive sigh, and with a calm resignation, better befitting a blind fatality than an enlightened reason, you say: "We must bide God's own good time!" forgetting that God's own good time is the first moment your child can understand you, and any and every available moment thereafter until Christ reign supremely in his heart. Pursue such a course, and as certainly as the great law of gravitation tends all things toward a common center, so certainly will love in the heart tend all hearts toward God, the great fountain and center of all love. Pursue such a course, and vice will give place to virtue; Satan's empire will diminish, and Christ's expand; peace will reign on earth with good will to man, and God be all in all, thrice blessed be his name for ever more.

THE SECOND ADAM.

The Apostle Paul speaks of Christ as the "second Adam." To the glorious announcement that through him life and immortality have been brought to light, we now turn our attention.

It has already in substance been stated, that there is an exact parallel between the first and second Adam. To the former men sustain a two-fold relation, from whence a two-fold death. To the latter also a two-fold relation, from whence will grow a two-fold life. These relations have already been styled physical and moral. In the physical relation all results are unconditional, whether pertaining to death by the first, or life by the second, Adam. In the moral relation all results are conditional, whether pertaining to life or death. This, inpart, anticipates the plea so frequently urged, that man ought to gain in Christ all he lost in Adam; and Paul is made to testify to this in saying, "For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all

be made alive." 1 Cor. xv, 22. All this is conceded. It is, however, much more easy to set up a claim in general terms, than to define the limits of a given claim. It must, therefore, be borne in mind, that the claim, herein set forth, has already been limited by the simple fact, that in the first Adam the physical life was all that was unconditionally lost, and hence, the only thing that can be in like manner gained in the second Adam. This will most unquestionably be granted, because Christ has taken upon himself the nature of man, and tasted death for every man, by virtue of which every man will live again; will live again, too, without any regard to what may have been his moral character before his death. This is the resurrection of the dead. In this resurrection, all will be included—Judas as well as John, Nero as well as Paul. Christ's language upon this point is explicit: "The hour is coming in the which all that are in the graves shall hear his voice, and shall come forth." John v, 28, 29. This, too, is unconditional; it restores to man the life, and the only life he lost in Adam. It restores it whether he even desire it or not. A man can not be so wicked but he will be a sharer in the general resurrection of the dead. Here the common principles of justice, so earnestly contended for, are fully answered, thus giving the most undoubted assurance that whatever was lost in the first Adam, without our knowledge or consent, will be in like manner restored by the second Adam. It may be styled very cold consolation that men are to be raised from the dead simply to be put to death again! but let the complainer remember, that should such be the case, it will be the fault of neither the first nor second Adam; for if men, during their lifetime will refuse to live the moral or spiritual life, so that when released from the grave they may live forever, it will be their own fault, and upon their own souls must rest all the results. This is further made evident

from the fact, that when Christ tasted death for every man, he not only broke the bars of the grave, but he prepared the means in the proper acceptance and use of which man may live forever; that is, he brought both life *and* immortality to light.

Before considering the things which pertain to the moral relation to, and moral life in, the second Adam, a few suggestions will be made concerning immortality. No theme has probably ever received more attention in either the Pagan or Christian world, than the "immortality of the soul." If the word *soul* be used scripturally, then immortality is not applicable to it, either in time or eternity. Immortality is the contrast with, and the opposite of, mortality. As applied to man, therefore, it must refer to *body*, and not to *soul*. To this the scriptures agree. It is this *mortal* that is to put on immortality. So much has been said about the soul, that almost all else about the man has been lost sight of. Preachers preach to save the soul; sinners are taught to save their souls; protracted seasons of anguish and weeping are spent to save the soul. Suppose it be saved, what is to become of the man? is there nothing of man but his soul? has he not a body and spirit? and is there not as much necessity for the salvation of these, as for the salvation of the soul? So entirely has the idea of saving the soul permeated the so called church, that all outward ordinances are discarded altogether, or declared non-essential; and if used, only as complimentary to the Lord; thus reducing religion to a mutable creation of the emotional nature—a thing of feeling, rather than a comprehensive system of action.

The so called church has never committed a graver error, than in losing sight of the great truth, that if man be saved at all, he must be saved body and soul and spirit; and that, therefore, the ordinances of salvation which relate to the outward or physical man are just as essential

as those which relate to the inner or spiritual man. Immortality is not something inherent, but something which relates to mortality—the body. It is something, in the language of Paul, to be sought after: Seek, says he, for glory and honor and immortality. Rom. ii, 7. If, however, already possessed, why seek for it? The scriptures declare Christ only hath immortality. This is true in the strictest sense of the term, because He only has passed through death with a mortal body, into life with a glorious or immortal body. The great work to be accomplished for man, is that his "vile body may be changed," Phil. iii, 21, and that when He appears we may be like Him, John iii, 2. In order to accomplish this, the gospel of Christ is equally applicable to the body and soul and spirit of man; and it is only in thus fully applying that gospel, that the life-giving principles are imparted to him, his body prepared for immortality, his soul purified from every unholy emotion, and his spirit crowned with everlasting life.

We may now turn our attention more specifically to the second, or moral relation to the second Adam, and the life growing out of that relation. This life is obtained, not without conditions, and can, therefore, belong to, and be enjoyed by, only those who comply with the requisite conditions. The conditions are set forth in the gospel of Christ, and are summarily presented in the single question of *obedience* to Him. Hence Paul's declaration—Christ became the author of eternal salvation unto all them that obey him. Heb. v, 9. This obedience must be voluntary, and must be rendered in person, and not by proxy. The gospel addresses those only who are competent to yield this voluntary obedience. All questions of infants and idiots are excluded, because if transgressors in any sense, it was not voluntary; and if obedient in any sense, that can not be voluntary. Nor have they need of obedience, since it relates exclusively to the moral or spiritual life.

This life they have never lost, never having sinned, and are therefore not dead in trespass and in sin. But it is the death by sin to which this life relates, and from which it proposes to rescue fallen man. This throws us back upon the principles already established, that man loses his moral life, not necessarily by virtue of his relation to the first Adam; but by reason of his own voluntary transgression of the law of God; and that he must regain his moral life, not by any necessary relation to the second Adam, but by his voluntary obedience to the law of the second Adam—the gospel of Jesus Christ. This is called the conditionality of the gospel. This places at once every man upon his own individual responsibility with respect to the entire moral phase of his salvation. This accords with Paul:—So then every one of us shall give account of himself to God. Were it otherwise, no man could be confident of his salvation at any time, not knowing at what moment he might be called upon to answer for another man's crimes. Yet just such a principle is established, when it is yielded that an infant is born dead in sin, because its parents—or remoter—because the first Adam sinned.

The human mind revolts at such a thought, and immediately busies itself in seeking relief. This it does in the most natural way, by going entirely to the other extreme, and assuming that not only is man not responsible for the sins of others, but he is not responsible for even his own; in other words, because Christ died for the world, therefore the world will be saved. The one claims that the world sinned through a secondary agency, unconditionally; the other thence concludes that the world will be saved by secondary agency unconditionally. The agency for the sin of the world is fixed upon the first Adam; the agency for the salvation of the world upon the second Adam. It has been shown that such premises and conclusions are alike false.

No moral relationship primarily exists between Christ and a sinner. The sinner is already dead. He need not wait for the grave to find death. He is already dead, having sinned. Christ comes, therefore, not to acknowledge a living relation between himself and the sinner, but to establish such relation. He came to seek and to save that which was lost. He only is lost who has sinned, for sin alone can draw a line between God and man. If man is lost by sin, he is lost now while in this world; so that he need not look forward with wonder to the day of judgment, having his fate already decided; for if a man know himself to be a sinner, and know himself to be refusing the means by which he can be freed from sin, he may also know with fearful certainty that he is lost now, and lost forever. On the other hand, no Christian need look to the day of judgment with fear and trembling, to await his sentence; for if he knows he obeys the law of Christ here, he also knows he is free from sin; and if saved from sin here, he will be saved forever. This virtually brings the question of salvation to the present life. It makes sin the separating chasm between God and man, and brings Christ into the world to span that chasm, in order that saved from sin, man may be returned to life and to God. To this the scriptures assent in the annunciation to Mary: Thou shalt call his name Jesus, for he shall save his people from their sins. The whole tenor of the New Testament confirms this. No man can read that book in his sober senses, without being impressed with that most prominent of all its features—holiness and godliness in this present world. Like the leaven in the three measures of meal, it permeates the whole book, giving life and divine character to its teachings, and impressing upon every honest heart the necessity of seeking pardon and peace through the life-giving, sin-atoning blood of the Lamb.

Thus much of man's moral relation to the second Adam,

entered into by obedience to him. Out of this relation grows a moral or spiritual life. This life, like the action from which it springs, must begin in this world. It begins too in infancy, a second infancy. Man must be born again, not physically, as Nicodemus tries to suppose, but spiritually; must go back to a new starting point in life, and as a babe in Christ, desire the sincere milk of the word, that he may grow thereby. There are conditions to this new birth—conditions without compliance with which, Christ says a man can not see the kingdom of God. These conditions appeal, not to any relations already existing between Christ and the sinner—or between the sinner and his parents; but at once to the understanding and conscience of the sinner himself. Thus it comes to pass, that as we lost our moral life by voluntary disobedience, we may regain it by voluntary obedience.

Now this is the sum of the whole matter. Man loses temporal life by the first Adam, unconditionally; the end is the grave. Man regains temporal life by the second Adam, unconditionally; the end is the resurrection from the grave. Man loses his moral life incidentally by the first Adam, but conditionally upon his own voluntary disobedience of law, as the first Adam disobeyed; the end is everlasting destruction from the presence of God, and the glory of His power. Man regains his moral life incidentally by the second Adam, but conditionally upon his own voluntary obedience of law, as the second Adam obeyed; the end is everlasting joy in the presence of God and the glory of His power.

Thus it appears that man will indeed gain in Christ all he lost in Adam. But he has lost infinitely more in himself than in any one else, and it is to this loss that the most earnest pleadings of Christ are directed. The unspeakable guilt of sin, incurred not by Adam for us, but by ourselves, it is the great mission of Christ to relieve.

It was necessary, therefore, that he should both die and be buried, that he might, by his resurrection, remove the effect of Adam's curse; and by his precious blood render it possible for God to forgive sin, and open the portals to eternal life. But that life can not be enjoyed without a body, nor can it be enjoyed in a mortal body; hence immortality which was brought to light with life, becomes not only the concomitant of that life, but the garb which clothes it, as our present mortal bodies clothe the lives we now live. Thus says Paul: We that are in this tabernacle do groan, being burdened; not that we would be unclothed, but clothed upon, that mortality might be swallowed up of life.

Such sublime inspirations lift up our longing eyes, and point them to the abodes of the holy and the good—point them to the habiliments of immortality, and the crown of eternal life. Plainer and brighter grows the pathway as we near its end, when at length bursts upon our enraptured vision the fadeless glories of the city of our God. Undiminished in its splendors by the flight of ceaseless ages, it will ever unfold new beauties, and forever impart fresh delights. Within its holy walls, innumerable angels will unite with the justified made perfect, in one grand pæan of praise and joy, surpassing all that earth has ever heard. O the raptures of such a vision! To the poor, it is infinite wealth; to the weary, undisturbed repose; to the wanderer, a blessed home; and to the dying, an arm of strength, mightier than death, hell, and the grave.

May God in His boundless mercy enable all who read these pages, so to live, that when the summons comes to bear them hence, they may enter into the cloudless light of that life and immortality, which have robbed Death of its sting—Grave of its victory.

SERMON XV.

THE GREAT COMMISSION.

BY WESLEY SHORT.

[As Elder Wesley Short was one of the prominent pioneer preachers and reformers of Indiana, we think it due to the memory of a good and influential man, to publish the following synopsis of a sermon preached by him before a Baptist Association, while he was still in full fellowship with them, and produced no small stir at the time.

Elder Short was born in Virginia, in 1780, December 20th, was married to Rebecca Owens in 1802, removed to Pulaski county, Kentucky, where he lived till the autumn of 1817. During his sojourn in Kentucky, there was a great revival of religion among the Baptists, in which he took an active part, as a minister, baptizing a great many of the converts. He having embraced religion and united with the Baptist Church, at the age of about twenty years, was immersed by old Neddy Kelly, and was soon after ordained to the work of the ministry, which office he faithfully and devotedly filled to the time of his departure.

Elder Short was naturally a poet, and his warm heart often produced songs of praise and Christian fortitude, several of which are still retained by his children.

In 1817, Elder Short moved to Washington county, Indiana, and the following spring he located in Lawrence county, where he lived until his death. Soon after he located in the state, the "White River Association" was organized, and Elder Short was a regular messenger to its annual meetings for six years. After

reading the *C. Baptist*, by A. Campbell, in 1826, he became convinced that human creeds were not only useless but mischievous instruments of division and discord. His preaching now lost its Calvanistic tone, and assumed the apostolic. Dry disquisitions on *tenets*, were changed to the missions of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the order of conversion at the beginning of the Christian covenant. The effect was marvelous, and truly glorious. Out of the church, where he had his membership, nearly all agreed to lay aside their human traditions, and adopt the commandments of God, and many were added to the Lord.

Much that would be interesting and instructive, might be said of this good man, and his labors and trials, as a minister, which does not fall within the scope of our plan. But this much we thought due to the memory of one of the pioneers of the reformation in Indiana, to prepare the reader for the following epitome of one of his sermons, preached before a Baptist Association, while he was still a Baptist minister. He was not an educated man; but a man of good reading, fair natural ability, and a warm heart. In a word, he was an effective and earnest speaker.

Elder Short continued to preach twenty-five years, after he embraced the reformation, making the whole period of his ministry more than fifty years. But on the 16th of September, 1852, he closed his earthly career by that *fell* destroyer, "*Asiatic cholera.*" He now rests from his labors, and his works follow him.—EDITOR.]

THE SERMON.

An epitome of the introductory sermon, preached by Elder Wesley Short, at the "White River Association of Regular Baptists," held at "Spice Valley Meeting-house," in Lawrence county, Indiana, on the second Saturday in August, 1827, from Luke xxiv, 46, 47.

"*And said unto them, Thus it is written, and thus it be-*

hooved Christ to suffer, and to rise from the dead the third day; and that repentance and remission of sins should be preached, in his name, among all nations, beginning at Jerusalem."

These words were spoken by our Saviour, after his resurrection from the dead, and before his ascension to heaven. They were addressed to his apostles, in connection with the great commission to preach the Gospel to all the world. It has been written in the law of Moses, and in the Psalms, and in the Prophets, that the Messiah should suffer death upon the tree of the cross; and they all bear witness that Jesus of Nazareth, the Son of Mary, was the true Messiah, who had, at that time, made his advent into the world. The ancient servants of God, the seers and the later prophets, often speak, in melting terms, of the sufferings of the Son of God, for the sins of the world. Moses says, it was declared to Abraham, while in Messopotamia, that: "In thee, that is, in thy seed, shall all the nations be blessed." And Paul says: "And that seed is Christ."

The same declaration was made by our Lord to Isaac, and afterward to Jacob. And when he was near dying, and while blessing his twelve sons, he said of Judah: "The scepter shall not depart from Judah, nor a lawgiver from between his feet, until the Shiloh come." The kingly scepter remained in the tribe of Judah, till near the birth of the Lord Jesus Christ, thus showing that he was the *Shiloh to come.* Balaam said: "There shall come a star out of Jacob, and a scepter shall rise out of Israel," pointing to the advent of the blessed Redeemer, who descended from Jacob, according to the flesh. And Moses himself says: "The Lord thy God will raise up unto thee a prophet, from the midst of thee, of thy brethren, like unto me; unto him ye shall hearken." These testimonies establish, beyond all doubt, that Jesus is the true Messiah. And David, in the second Psalm, speaking of the conquests of the Lord

Jesus Christ, when he ascended up on high, says: "Yet have I set my king upon my Holy Hill of Zion. I will declare the decree: The Lord hath said unto me, Thou art my Son; this day have I begotten thee." And in the 22d Psalm, we have a description of the sufferings of Christ, while on the cross, saying: "My God! my God, why hast thou forsaken me! Why art thou so far from helping me, and from the words of my roaring? O God, I cry in the day-time, but thou hearest not; and in the night-season, and am not silent—but I am a woman, and no man, a reproach of men, and despised of the people. All they that see me, laugh me to scorn."

This is the way he was treated, who is Lord of the whole universe, and who holds the destiny of all in his hands! In the sixteenth Psalm, David shows that it behooved Christ to rise from the dead, saying, "I have set the Lord always before me, because he is at my right hand, I shall not be moved. Therefore my heart is glad, and my glory rejoiceth; my flesh also shall rest in hope, for thou wilt not leave my soul in hell (the unseen world), neither wilt thou suffer thy Holy One to see corruption."

The priesthood of Jesus is set forth in most imposing language in the one hundred and tenth Psalm: "The Lord said unto my Lord, sit thou at my right hand, until I make thy enemies thy footstool—the Lord hath sworn, and will not repent, Thou art a priest forever, after the order of Melchisedec." By inspiration, David here points to the priesthood of Jesus Christ, and shows that it was not after the order of Aaron, the great highpriest of Israel, but was like to one who had been a priest long before the days of Aaron, and whose priesthood was not inherited from a father, nor transmitted to his posterity; but was unchangeable and eternal.

We will next hear the testimony of the holy prophets. Isaiah, the evangelical prophet, when describing the advent

of the great Messiah, chapter ninth, says: "Unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given." He then goes on to describe the strength of his government, and the peaceable nature of his reign. He says: "The government shall be upon his shoulder, and his name shall be called Wonderful Counsellor, the Mighty God, the Everlasting Father, the Prince of Peace." He also testifies that it behooved the Saviour to suffer, and tells us the *design* of his sufferings, in chapter fifty-third, "He is despised and rejected of men; a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief, and we hid, as it were, our faces from him; he was despised, and we esteemed him not. Surely he hath borne our griefs, and carried our sorrows; yet we did esteem him stricken, smitten of God, and afflicted. But he was wounded for our transgressions; he was bruised for our iniquities. The chastisement of our peace was upon him, and with his stripes we are healed. All we, like sheep, have gone astray; we have turned every one to his own way, and the Lord hath laid on him the iniquity of us all. He was oppressed, and he was afflicted, yet he opened not his mouth; he is brought as a lamb to the slaughter, and as a sheep before her shearers is dumb, so he opened not his mouth." But time would fail me to quote all that the prophets have said of the sufferings of Christ, and his glorious resurrection from the dead.

When Christ commissioned his apostles to preach the Gospel to all nations, he directed that repentance and remission of sins should be included in their teachings as the means of rendering us acceptable to God. John the Baptist, in the wilderness of Judea and on the banks of the Jordan, cried aloud to the people to repent. Jesus began his mission by saying, "Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand." He afterward solemnly warned the people, saying, "Except ye repent, shall all likewise perish." The first ambassadors of the cross announced to

those who were cut to the heart: "Repent and be baptized, every one of you, in the name of Jesus Christ, for the remission of sins." And on another occasion: "Repent and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out." And again, "God hath commanded all men everywhere to repent." The mercy of the Lord is great to poor fallen man to permit him to come into his favor and enjoy the pardon of his sins—to "wash his robe and make it white in the blood of the Lamb," by turning away from all his iniquities. By breaking off his sins, by righteousness, and by doing all that God has commanded, we may grow in grace and be built in love. By turning away from all human institutions we may be built upon the foundations of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner-stone. And being united on the one foundation, the "one Lord, the one faith, and the one baptism," we will be enabled to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bonds of peace. And that all who do justly love mercy, and walk humbly before our God, should be united in the church of Jesus Christ, to continue steadfastly in the apostle's doctrine, in the fellowship, in the breaking of bread, and in prayers. And by continuing in these things there may be ministered to us an abundant entrance into the everlasting kingdom of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.

(Reported by his son, M. SHORT.)

SERMON XVI.

THE DEATH OF CHRIST NECESSARY.

BY J. M. HENRY.

And he said unto them, "Thus it is written, and thus it behooved Christ to suffer, and to rise from the dead the third day; and that repentance and remission of sins should be preached in his name among all nations, beginning at Jerusalem. And ye are witnesses of these things." LUKE XXIV: 46-48.

ETERNITY will never exhaust the riches of this theme. The redeemed in the heavenly world will sing forever, "Thou art worthy to take the book and to open the seals thereof; for thou wast slain, and hast redeemed us to God by thy blood out of every kindred, and tongue, and people, and nation; and hast made us unto our God kings and priests; and we shall reign on the earth." The saints on earth overcome the accuser of the brethren, by the blood of the Lamb, and by the word of their testimony. Jesus was made, for a little while, lower than the angels, that he, by the grace of God, should taste death for every man. This is he by whom all things were made, and without whom was not anything made that was made. God called him his only begotten Son—his beloved Son, in whom He is well pleased. So full was Jesus of Divinity, in the days of his pilgrimage on the earth, that all the angels, at the commandment of God, fell down and worshiped him. His dignity is such as to entitle to the profoundest regard every thought revealed concerning him. The richest sacrifices ever offered before, could not take away sins; but by the offering of himself, Jesus perfected forever them that are sanctified. The sufferings of Christ, and the glory that should follow, were of such importance that the

prophets searched and inquired diligently concerning them, and the angles desired to look into these wonderful things. Paul, under the influence of inspiration, declared to the church at Corinth, that he determined not to know anything among them, save Jesus Christ, and him crucified. The death of Christ is the ground of hope for a lost and ruined world. Ever since it occurred, it has been the joyful theme of all the holy men on earth. Let it, then, command our prayerful attention.

The death of Jesus became necessary, in order to accomplish the divine purpose in creating man.

That purpose is recorded Gen. i, 26. And God said, Let us make man in our image, after our likeness; and let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over the cattle, and over all the earth, and over every creeping thing that creepeth upon the earth. David says, Ps. viii, 6, Thou madest him to have dominion over the works of thy hands; thou hast put all things under his feet. Paul also says, Heb. ii, 8–9, Thou hast put all things in subjection under his feet. For in that he put all things in subjection under him, he left nothing not put under him. But now we see not yet all things put under him. But we see Jesus, who was made a little while lower than the angels for the suffering of death, crowned with glory and honor; that he, by the grace of God, should taste death for every man.

From these passages, God's purpose in creating man was known during forty centuries of the history of our race. But Adam sinned, and lost the scepter, the crown, and all pertaining to his royal character and condition. He was sent forth from the garden, the original seat of his empire, to endure for a time, degradation and toil. To make his labor more severe, the ground was cursed for his sake; "thorns and briars shall it bring forth, and in the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat bread until thou return

unto the ground." A finite intelligence having learned God's purpose in making man, and then seeing him so soon fail for that design, would probably conclude that God's plans were frustrated. That this, however, was not the case, may be indicated in his language to the serpent—"I will put enmity between thee and the woman, between thy seed and her seed, it shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel." Time bore the race onward through four thousand years, and with it the hope and numerous and various prophecies of him that should bring deliverance to man, and overthrow to the serpent

"Blind unbelief is sure to err,
And scan his work in vain;
God is his own interpreter,
And he will make it plain."

'In the fullness of the time, God sent forth his Son, * * * * that we might receive the adoption of sons." "Forasmuch, then, as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, he also himself likewise took part of the same; that through death he might destroy him that had the power of death, that is the devil; and deliver them who, through fear of death, were all their lifetime subject to bondage." The overthrow of him that had the power of death, and the adoption of men as sons of God, in order to the accomplishment of the divine purpose in man's creation, made Jesus' death necessary.

We make no inquiry of God's purposes beyond what is revealed; for all such inquiries are a virtual abandonment of faith for philosophy—of what God has written for human reason. God ordained, as it is written, that Adam should not eat of the fruit of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. If it be said that God secretly decreed that he should eat of it, then, whether he eat or not, a decree of God will be broken; and further, faith in his word is overthrown, because what was recorded as his

will, was what his secret purpose determined should not come to pass. Let us never tread the border of so dangerous a vortex as that.

Man's history does not terminate with the few days of his existence on the earth, in his present condition of labor and suffering. In the sequel of God's revelations to us, man is represented as being a king and a priest to God; and having overcome, as Jesus overcame, is seated with him on his Father's throne.

The maintainance of the divine veracity made the death of Jesus necessary.

"The word of the Lord," says David, "is established in heaven forever. The word of the Lord, which by the gospel is preached unto us, endureth forever." "These are the words that I spake unto you, while I was yet with you, that all things must be fulfilled which were written in the law of Moses, and in the prophets, and in the Psalms concerning me."

We may learn much of how God regards his word, if we remember some fifty predictions made directly concerning the Messiah, nearly all of which refer to his death, and the circumstances attending it. Not one of these fails, though Jesus must be condemned by a human tribunal to a most painful and shameful death, that their truthfulness be vindicated.

God had said, they shall look on him whom they pierced. If he is not pierced, how shall the divine veracity be maintained? His cry, "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?" had been foretold, and how shall this be made true, if Jesus utter not that wail? It had been written that he should be numbered with the malefactors, hence the necessity of his death with thieves. His hands and feet were pierced, according to a prediction one thousand years old. They gave him gall for his meat, and vinegar for his drink, when he cried from the cross; for it was written.

He died so soon on the cross as to cause Pilate to marvel, for it had been written in the Psalms, "Thou hast known my reproach, and my shame, and my dishonor; mine adversaries are all before thee. Reproach hath broken my heart, and I am full of heaviness." It was written, "All they that see me, laugh me to scorn; they shoot out the lip, they shake the head, saying, he trusted in the Lord that he would deliver him, let him deliver him, seeing he delighted in him.' All this was borne by him. From all this, and much more of a kindred character, the conclusion is easy that Jesus died to vindicate his Father's word. Another is equally clear, viz.: if God would allow his Son to suffer as he did, and even forsook him, that his word might be kept true, he will also forsake and permit every sinner to suffer who may be found in the day of judgment adverse to his word. There is no hope for us, except that which is built upon his word.

The law of Moses had a shadow of good things to come. Under it a font of beautiful and appropriate types was instituted. Among other things adumbrated there, nothing occupied a more prominent place than those typical of the death of Christ. Shall they all be abortive of the purpose for which they were given? It would have been so had not Jesus died. All the blood that had been offered by divine authority from the beginning, for remission of sins, was typical of the precious blood of Christ, who, in this manner, was as a lamb slain from the foundation of the world. Without the shedding of blood, there was no remission. The sacrifice of bulls, calves, lambs, and goats could not take away sins, though offered according to the law of Moses. Jesus, by his death, for the redemption of the transgressions that were under the first testament, gave promise of eternal inheritance to them that are called, and offered himself through the eternal Spirit without spot to God, to purge the conscience from dead works to serve

the living God. The types were all fulfilled, and the prophecies concerning his sufferings verified, that our faith produced by the word of God may be strong, and our hope in his promises rest on a sure foundation.

That God may be just in saving believers in Jesus, his death was necessary.—

That Jesus died as a substitute for sinners should not be overlooked. He did not, however, suffer all that the impenitent will suffer in a future state, for then he would have to endure everlasting punishment. Neither were his sufferings an equivalent for what the ungodly will suffer, for then there could be no pardon extended to those who are saved; and the scriptures teach that the saved are all pardoned persons. He did not die because God was angry with the world, but because he loved it. Man's sins lay in the way of God's purpose in creating him, and an honorable and justifiable ground for pardoning him must be presented, or man must forever perish, and God's design in creating him, fail. God, therefore, set forth his Son to be a propitiation through faith in his blood, to declare his righteousness, for the remission of sins that are past, through the forbearance of God—to declare, at this time his righteousness; that he might be just, and the justifier of him which believeth in Jesus. Rom. iii, 25, 26.

God pardons men for the sake of his Son. "I write unto you, little children, because your sins are forgiven you for his name's sake. 1 John ii, 12. The death of Christ, considered as the divine expedient for saving men, is what is generally denominated the atonement. Such is the worth of the sacrifice of the Son of God, that sinners may be pardoned for his sake, that otherwise must perish forever. No just cause of complaint can be brought by any intelligent being in the universe against the government of God, because he pardons the believer in Jesus.

Pardon may, and often has been extended, by human

governments, to the injury of the government, for insufficient reasons. The object of government is the good of the governed. Mercy may be exercised when it can be done without weakening the government, and injuring the governed.

A familiar illustration of a government pardoning an offender, and maintaining its authority, is furnished in the history of Zaleucus, the king of the Locrians. He had enacted a law against adultery, the penalty of which was that the offender should lose both eyes. The first person convicted of this offense was the king's own son. As a father he felt anxiety to save his son, but as a king he felt disposed to maintain his authority for the good of the government. If from his paternal feelings he pardons his son, his subjects will dispise him as a ruler. If he repeals the law to save his son, he may be justly charged with weakness; and if, on the other hand, the law is executed, his son must grope in blindness through the world the rest of his days. How shall he be merciful to his son, and maintain his authority over his subjects? He decided to lose one of his own eyes, and destroy one of the son's eyes. In acting thus the king exercised mercy to his son, and at the same time secured the integrity of his authority. Let us see how this transaction would affect his subjects. They hear of the case—the king's son has violated the law. Will his father punish him? If he does, we may be sure that he will punish us, if we disobey. They learn that the king has spared one eye of his son, and had one of his own destroyed as a substitute for the son's other eye. Does one of the king's subjects say he has acted unjustly? On the contrary, every one thinks, if the king has been merciful to his son, he has shown such a regard for his law, that if I dare to violate it, I will be punished as certainly as I am convicted. The dignity of the king, as a ruler, silences all objections. He has been merciful, and sustained his authority.

The case of the Prophet Daniel is an illustration of an attempt made by the king to be merciful to him, and failed. A decree had been signed by the king, that no petition should be made to any god or man, except to the king himself, for thirty days, on pain of being cast into a den of lions. Daniel continued his custom of praying three times a day, with the windows of his room open toward Jerusalem. His enemies watched him, and reported his disregard of the unalterable decree to the king. "Then the king, when he heard these words, was sore displeased with himself, and set his heart on Daniel, to deliver him: and he labored till the going down of the sun to deliver him!" Dan. vi, 14. The king was doubtless striving to spare Daniel, and maintain the decree. He failed, however, and did the best thing that he could—maintained the decree, and commended Daniel to the God in whom he trusted, who delivered him. There was no honorable ground on which the king could pardon the prophet. In other words, no atonement could be found. Had he substituted a less honorable man for Daniel, it would not have answered the ends of government. One equally honorable in the king's judgment, could not be found. It would not have answered the purpose to have compelled any one of the presidents or nobles of his kingdom to suffer instead of Daniel. It might have answered the purpose, if some one had voluntarily offered himself in Daniel's place.

Jesus Christ voluntarily came and suffered in our behalf, so that God does no violence to his government, in pardoning the man who complies with the terms his Son submits. God accepted the offering that Jesus made of himself, and regards it sufficiently worthy and honorable to give all rule, and authority, and dominion, into the hands of his Son; and power to execute judgment also, because he is the Son of Man, partook of flesh and blood, humbled himself, and was found in fashion as a man.

To this it is objected, that Jesus was innocent, and men guilty before God. The idea of the innocent suffering for the guilty, is revolting to our sense of justice. It is a fact, nevertheless, that one certain result of sin is, that the innocent suffer on account of the sins of the wicked, all around the world. For proof of this, look into any one of ten thousand households that can be found in this country. See the bare walls, the cheerless appearance of everything in that poor dilapidated hut. Contemplate the inmates. There sits, in worn and faded clothing, one young in years, but old in sorrow. Her eye, that once sparkled with joy, and was met with pleasure by numerous friends, has lost its radiance, and the cheek that once bore the impress of health and beauty, is faded and sorrowful. Her heart-strings have been relaxed and broken, one by one, until life is a burden, and hope, so often disappointed, has gone out forever. Little ones gather around her knee in your presence, as if in fear, because a stranger talks to their mother. They are in clean rags, that scarcely hide their nakedness. They look pale and hungry. Their young hearts, that are capable of gladness, are being schooled to sorrow and woe. Ask the cause of all that sad condition. An honest shame mantles the cheek, with a feeble ray of former beauty, but soon fades to pallor, as she says, "My husband is an indolent drunkard."

Is she, poorer than the widow, to blame for all her sorrow? Are her little ones, less fortunate than orphans, at fault because they suffer? Answer me, you who say the innocent suffer not for the guilty. Do you say that is all wrong? So it is, but is it not a fact, that the innocent suffer for the guilty, as one of the *certain* consequences of sin? Why, then, object to the "suffering of the just for the unjust," if God in his wisdom and mercy uses this as the occasion to bring us salvation? God is just in jus-

tifying the believer in Jesus, in forgiving sins for Christ's sake.

The death of Jesus was necessary to show the love of God.

"God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him, should not perish, but have everlasting life." John iii, 16. The frequent repetition of this statement in the word of God, renders its quotation, in other places unnecessary, to the careful reader of the Bible. How, except by what we do, say, and suffer for another, can we show him our love? In all these respects, nothing is wanting on the part of heaven, to show the most earnest love to our ruined race. Such words of grace and gentleness never fell on the human ear, as those employed by our blessed Lord, in the days of his flesh. Hear him addressing the poor miserable woman, brought before him by his enemies. After they have been conscience-smitten by his address to them, he said to her: "Has no man condemned thee?" She said, "no man, Lord." Said he, "neither do I condemn thee: go and sin no more." Hear him comforting Martha and Mary, in their bereavement. His voice is most soothing, his bosom heaves with emotion too great for words, and is feebly indicated by weeping. Listen again, as he converses with his disciples, just before his death. They are almost overcome with sorrow, because he has told them he must leave them. "Let not your heart be troubled: ye believe in God, believe also in me. In my Father's house are many mansions: if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you: and if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and receive you unto myself; that where I am, there ye may be also." Time fails to repeat now, all that he said, expressive of his great love to us.

More forcible than his words, are his benevolent acts.

He healed the sick, unstopped the ears of the deaf to the harmonies of nature, and the music of his own sweet voice, opened the eyes of the blind, to see plainly; cast out demons, and restored to life and the embrace of weeping friends, the dead. His Omnipotent power was employed to do good. His miracles, excepting two, were of a merciful character. "He did all things well."

Admire, as we justly may, his love to us, as shown in what he said and did, all that is completely eclipsed in what he suffered for the world. What human tongue or pen can describe his amazing sorrows of heart! After instituting the supper, in commemoration of his body and blood, and walking toward the garden in Gethsemane with his little company of disciples, he said to them: "Now is my soul exceeding sorrowful, even unto death; and what shall I say? Father, save me from this hour? and yet for this cause came I unto this hour." When he had entered the garden, he prostrated himself on the cold earth, and being in agony, he said: "Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from me; nevertheless, not as I will, but as thou wilt." This he did three times. At last an angel appeared to strengthen him. But for this angelic assistance, he might have died there. He was made known to those that accompanied Judas to arrest him, by the traitor's kissing him. He was taken to Pilate, and by him sent to Herod, because Herod was in the city, and Jesus was a Galilean. Herod had long desired to see him, and witness his performance of a miracle. Jesus will not even converse with him, which so exasperates Herod, that he and his men of war set him at nought, and arrayed him in a gorgeous robe, and returned him to Pilate. These two rulers were made friends that day. Then Pilate examined him, and reported to the Jews who sought his death, that he found no fault in him. The governor was disposed to release him, but they said if he did, he was not Cæser's

friend. He sought to reason them out of their opposition to Jesus, but to no purpose. You have a custom, said he, that I should release one prisoner at this feast to you. Here are Jesus and Barabbas in my custody; which of them will you that I release? They said, not this man, but Barabbas. He had been a leader of an insurrection in the city, and had committed murder. Think of it as we may, it is certain that Jesus was put to death instead of Barrabas, who was one of the most wicked of men. Pilate then, seeing he could not reason them out of their opposition, took Jesus and had him scourged. Presenting him to them, bathed in his own blood, and quivering in every muscle, and his countenance so marred, that there was no beauty that they should desire him, Pilate said, behold the man. His suffering does not move their hard hearts. What shall I do with him? asked Pilate. Away with him, away with him, crucify him, crucify him, said the multitude. Pilate, alarmed at their wickedness, and startled by a message from his wife, who said, see thou have nothing to do with that innocent man, said, shall I crucify your king? We have no king but Cæsar, they answered. He then called for a basin, and in their presence washed his hands, saying, I am clean from the blood of this innocent man, see ye to it. They said, his blood be on us, and on our children. Then Pilate gave sentence that he should be crucified. They hurry him away with the cross on him. On the way he reels, faints, and falls, beneath the weight of the cross. There they met a man from Cyrene, named Simon, whom they compelled to carry the cross to the place of execution. The only act that seems to have any compassion in it, during the whole of this awful tragedy, was the offer made by one of the soldiers, that had charge of his execution, of a cup of wine, mingled with myrrh. He would do nothing that should mitigate the bitterness of the cup his Father had given him to drink. They nailed

him to the cross, and then mocked him, bowing before him in worship, saying, If thou be the Christ, come down from the cross, and we will believe thee. He saved others, he can not save himself! Hail, king of the Jews! Ah, thou that destroyest the temple, and buildest it in three days! He said God was his Father!

See his agonies! Hear his cry! My God! My God! why hast thou forsaken me? He calls for water, and they offer him vinegar and gall. After three hours of the strongest suffering ever borne on this earth, he says, Father, into thy hands I commit my spirit, and bowed his head and died. The heavens and earth were mantled in darkness by the time he expired. While all were in consternation, and men speak to one another in whispers, a new alarm startles the guilty consciences, for a distant rumbling is heard, the earth trembles, and the sound increases, as if the foundations of the globe were being broken. The centurion speaks, and says, truly, this good man is the Son of God. The darkness passes away, and many graves of the saints are found open; the vail in the temple has been rent from the top to the bottom. Pilate, on being informed of the speedy death of Jesus, marveled at it.

There never was such a death, for there never was such a victim. There never was such suffering, for there never was such love to be shown by suffering. God laid on him the iniquity of us all; the chastisement of our peace was on him; by his stripes we are healed.

By his sufferings that he voluntarily bore, we know he loved us. He could have prayed his Father, and instantly twelve legions of angels would have hastened to his rescue from the hands of his murderers. But then how should God's purpose in creating man have been accomplished? How could sinners have been induced to love God? Without love to Him, how could they have been brought to reformation? This is love, not that we love God, but

that he loved us, and sent his Son to be the propitiation for our sins. God commended his love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us.

Christ did not die a martyr for the truth, but offered himself a sacrifice for sins. If he died only as a martyr, he was less fortunate than any of his disciples that have died for their love of him since, for he was forsaken of God, which none of them ever was. In the bitterness of his sorrows is God's love to us manifested. Jesus left heaven, and all its glories and honors, became poor as the poorest of the children of earth, that all might know he loved them. When the foxes had holes, and the birds of the air had nests, he had no place to lay his head. He became poor, that we through his poverty might be rich. When he had given all else, then he laid down his life, a ransom for all.

The death of Christ was necessary to induce men to love God and forsake sin.

"For it became him, for whom are all things, and by whom are all things, in bringing many sons unto glory, to make the captain of their salvation perfect through sufferings." "And being made perfect, he became the author of eternal salvation to all them that obey him."

The perfection of Christ as a Saviour is here declared to be through suffering. His sufferings, voluntarily endured, form an honorable ground for God to pardon the believer in Jesus. To show man the sinfulness of sin, and the love of God, Jesus suffered as he did. Suffering certainly could add nothing to the wisdom, goodness, power, or knowledge of the Lord. But his sufferings do perfectly adapt him to influence the human heart to love him, and hate sin. That Christ died for our sins according to the scriptures, that he was buried, and that he rose again the third day, according to the scriptures, are the grand facts,

declared to be the gospel, by which men are saved, if they keep it in memory. 1 Cor. xv, 2–4.

The apostles were commanded to preach the gospel. They always referred to the death of Christ for men's sins, as proof that God loved them, and that they should forsake their transgressions. "The love of Christ constraineth us; because we thus judge, that if one died for all, then were all dead, that they who live should not henceforth live unto themselves, but unto him, which died for them, and rose again." 2 Cor. v, 14, 15. The mind in contemplating the death of Christ for sins, easily arrives, indeed, is compelled to the conclusion, that sin is of such a nature as to make it unsafe for one longer to continue in it. If I would be saved, I must turn from my iniquities to the Lord. God knows the difficulties sin has placed in the way of my salvation, and for their removal allowed his own Son to suffer as he did, that those who live should not live unto themselves, but unto Christ who died for them; then if I will not be warned, my punishment will be just.

There is a disposition in the human mind to regard sin as less obnoxious than it is, and to apologize for it. This disposition must give way in the presence of the sufferings of the Messiah, or we can not be saved. The man whose heart can remain untouched by the evangelical narratives of the sufferings of the Son of God, need look in no other direction for saving power. Those narratives are the most precious and wonderful records ever known to man. They contain the power of God to save them that believe. There is a point of contact between the human heart, and the power of God. That point is Christ crucified. There is power in the death of human friends to move our souls greatly. How much more then in the death of Jesus, our heavenly friend? He whose heart is not moved to love God by the sufferings of Christ, must think too lightly of

sin and the great love wherewith God has loved us, to be accepted of him. Being made perfect by his sufferings, to lead men to love him, and hate sin, he is the author of eternal salvation, to all them that obey him.

"He laid down his life, that he might take it again." "He was declared to be the Son of God with power according to the Spirit of holiness by the resurrection from the dead." Through death and the resurrection, he reached the scepter and the throne of universal dominion, in heaven and earth. All may trust in him, for he is able and willing to save, to the uttermost, all that come to God by him.

His death was necessary, that reformation and remission of sins should be preached in his name among all nations.

So Jesus declares. No terms of pardon, nor precedent for our salvation, can be found, *in his name*, before he arose from the dead. Persons were forgiven by him during his ministry on the earth, but not by his own authority. He came in his Father's name. My Father, said he, he doeth the works. He was obedient to the will of his Father, whose love and authority, as manifested in the law of Moses, continued until his death on the cross. The proclamation of reformation and pardon, he said, should begin by his authority in Jerusalem. Jesus began to preach in Galilee. Matt. iv, 17. What he preached is called the gospel of the kingdom. What he said was, "Reform, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand." After he arose from the dead, and ascended to heaven, no inspired man has said, the kingdom of heaven is at hand. On the contrary, the first discourse preached after his ascension, declared that God had made Jesus both Lord and Christ. This believed, caused the people to ask the apostles of Christ what they should do? They were promptly told to reform, and be immersed *in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ*, for

the remission of sins, and they should receive the gift of the Holy Spirit.

The fact that God has given all dominion and power, in heaven and earth, into the hands of his Son, is repeated substantially in every discourse and epistle of the apostles after Jesus' coronation in heaven. They say that God has given him a name which is above every name; that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow; that every tongue shall confess that he is Lord, to the glory of God the Father. There is a lamentable failure among the professed friends of Jesus to confess his authority as supreme in all the matters of salvation. When he said to one man in the days of his flesh, "Thy sins are forgiven thee;" or to the thief on the cross, "This day shalt thou be with me in paradise," no precedent is thereby furnished for the way we shall be saved. These men were saved by divine authority. Jesus had not then died, nor risen from the dead; both of which were necessary in order to the proclamation of repentance and remission of sins by his authority. The apostles pleaded Jesus' authority for their preaching to the people. "He commanded us to preach unto the people," said they. Acts x, 42.

The proclamation of reformation and remission of sins was to commence in the city of Jerusalem It was to be done by the power with which the apostles were to be endowed by an immersion in the Holy Spirit. They claimed to be ambassadors of Christ. Their credentials were shown by their power to speak in many languages, to heal the sick, to cast out demons, to raise the dead, and to do many wonderful works. They were invested with power to submit the terms of pardon to all nations and to every creature. Through them alone, guided as they were by the Holy Spirit infallibly, can we learn the way of salvation. What they taught is sanctioned by the authority of Christ, the Lord of lords, and King of kings. How

reformation and forgiveness are preached by Jesus' authority, we must learn of his apostles.

They taught that men must believe in Christ, or they can not be saved. "By him all that believe are justified from all things, from which they could not be justified by the law of Moses." Acts xiii, 39. "Sirs, what must I do to be saved? and they said, Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved, and thy house." Acts xvi, 30, 31.

They taught repentance toward God. "The times of this ignorance, God winked at; but now commandeth all men everywhere to reform; because he hath appointed a day in the which he will judge the world in righteousness, by that man whom he hath ordained; whereof he hath given assurance unto all men, in that he hath raised him from the dead." Acts xvii, 30, 31. "Repent and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out, when the times of refreshing shall come from the presence of the Lord." Acts iii, 19.

They taught that men must confess the name of Christ. "If thou believest with all thy heart, thou mayst be immersed. And he answered and said, I believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God." Acts viii, 39. "If thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved. For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness; and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation." Rom. x, 9, 10.

They taught that men must be baptized in order to be saved. Reform, and be immersed every one of you, in the name of Jesus Christ, for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit." Acts ii, 38. "Paul said, Lord, what wilt thou have me to do? And the Lord said unto him, Arise, and go into the city, and there it shall be told thee what thou must do." Acts ix, 6.

"Ananias said to Paul, And now why tarriest thou? Arise, and be baptized, and wash away thy sins, calling on the name of the Lord." Acts xxii, 16. "The like figure whereunto even baptism doth also now save us (not the putting away the filth of the flesh, but the answer of a good conscience toward God), by the resurrection of Jesus Christ." 1 Pet. iii, 21.

They taught that men should call on the name of the Lord to be saved. "And it shall come to pass, that whosoever shall call on the name of the Lord, shall be saved." Acts ii, 21. "For whosoever shall call on the name of the Lord shall be saved." Rom. x, 13. "Arise, and be baptized, and wash away thy sins, calling on the name of the Lord." Acts xxii, 16.

From the foregoing it is seen that faith, reformation, confession of Christ, immersion, and calling on the name of the Lord were all taught, and the promise of salvation connected with each. Should we refuse to obey any one of these commandments, we neglect and come short of one promise of salvation. All of them were required to be observed, by the ambassadors of Christ. He died and rose again, that they might be proclaimed by his authority. He who disregards these things, disregards to the same extent the death and resurrection of the Lord Jesus Christ. He died for all, that they who live should not henceforth live unto themselves, but unto him who died for them, and rose again.

Those who comply with the above conditions are pardoned. Then, if they add to faith, virtue; and to virtue, knowledge; and to knowledge, temperance; and to temperance, patience; and to patience, godliness; and to godliness, brotherly kindness; and to brotherly kindness, charity, an abundant entrance will be ministered unto them, into the everlasting kingdom of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.

To persons possessed of the above characteristics, the death, resurrection, and glorification of the Christ is a pleasing theme, and forever will be. They that overcome, as he overcame, shall sit with Christ on his throne. They shall inherit all things. To them crowns and scepters, and dominion over all things will be given. Then they will sing, "Thou art worthy, O Lord, to receive glory and honor and power; for thou hast created all things, and for thy pleasure they are and were created." Then it will be clearly seen, that God has not been frustrated in his purpose in creating man. The most wonderful scene in the whole drama is, and forever will be, the death of Christ according to the scriptures, that repentance and remission of sins should be preached in his name among all nations, beginning at Jerusalem.

"Rock of Ages, cleft for me,
Let me hide myself in thee;
Let the water and the blood,
From thy side a healing flood,
Be of sin the double cure—
Save from wrath and make me pure.

Should my tears forever flow,
Should my zeal no languor know,
This for sin could not atone;
Thou must save, and thou alone:
In my hand no price I bring;
Simply to thy cross I cling.

While I draw this fleeting breath,
When my eyelids close in death,
When I rise to worlds unknown,
And behold thee on thy throne—
Rock of Ages, cleft for me,
Let me hide myself in thee!"

SERMON XVII.

THE QUALIFICATIONS AND DUTIES OF A CHRISTIAN BISHOP.

BY O. A. BURGESS.

THERE are two words in the New Testament necessary to be considered in reference to the above subject. They are "*episcope*," and "*episcopos*." The first signifies an office, the second an officer. The former occurs four times, the latter five times, in the New Testament. In the first epistle to Timothy, iii, 1, the Apostle Paul says: "If a man desire the office of a bishop, he desireth a good work." In this scripture, "*episcope*" is used, and not "*episcopos*." In Acts, xx, 28, the Apostle Paul charges the Ephesian elders to take heed unto themselves, and to the flock over which the Holy Spirit had made them overseers. In this scripture the word translated overseers, is "*episcopos*;" the same word in the four other times used, translated bishop. It thus appears that one word is used to designate the office, and another the officer, as above stated. Again, it is stated in Acts xx, 28, that Paul "called the elders of the church," and that, in the address which he made to those elders, he declared that the Holy Spirit *had made* them bishops (overseers) over the flock. This will lead us to inquire who these elders were, before the Holy Spirit made them bishops. This inquiry in itself will suggest that elder and bishop are not to be used as synonymous terms. The term elder is here to be regarded as a generic; the term bishop as a specific. *It is* true, an elder may become a bishop; but he is not a

bishop simply because he is an elder. It is even further true, that a man must *be* an elder before he can become a bishop. All citizens of the United States are not presidents thereof; yet all presidents must be citizens before they can become presidents. That a man must be an elder before he can become a bishop, may, therefore, be set down as the first qualification of a Christian bishop. That there is at least one scripture which speaks of "ordaining elders," is not called in question. But that will be fully considered in due time. For the present, however, let us turn our attention to the distinctive scriptural use of the term elder.

The first occurrence of the word elder in the Bible, is in Genesis x, 21, where Shem is called the brother of Japheth the elder; the second occurrence is Genesis xv, 23, where it is said of Jacob and Esau, the elder shall serve the younger. There are various other scriptures, ranging from Genesis to Peter's first epistle, applying to, and including, both male and female, where the term elder is used simply to indicate that one person spoken of is elder (older) than another, without any reference to their respective ages. They may have been old men, as was sometimes the case when applied to elders in Israel; they may have been unborn babes, as was the case when applied to Jacob and Esau, and yet the term elder equally applies to both. It thus appears that the primary use of the term elder only indicates chronological order, without regard to the number of years, or even days, involved in that chronology.

The term in the plural form, next claims attention—elders. This first occurs in Genesis l, 71, where it is applied exclusively to the house of Pharaoh and the land of Egypt. The special use of the term, therefore, as relating to office or officers, is of Egyptian origin, and was borrowed and adopted by the Israelites during their sojourn

as slaves in that land. A few scriptures will suffice to show the use of the term, after the people of Israel were delivered from bondage, and had a law of their own. Deut. xxix, 10: Ye stand this day all of you before the Lord your God; your captains of your tribes, your elders and your officers, with all the men of Israel. Deut. xxxi, 28: Gather unto me all the elders of your tribes and your officers. Numbers xi, 16: The Lord said to Moses, gather unto me seventy men of the elders of Israel, whom thou knowest to be the elders of the people and officers over them. From these scriptures it is clear that elders and officers were separately spoken of. It also appears that the same men called elders were sometimes, but not necessarily, the officers. To make this clear, let us again examine Numbers xi, 16. It appears that Moses had entered bitter complaint before the Lord, because he had placed upon him alone, all the burden of ruling and judging Israel. So heavily did this responsibility press upon him, that Moses besought the Lord to kill him, rather than require so much at his hands. Upon this complaint the Lord commanded the seventy elders to be brought to the tabernacle to stand with Moses; and the Lord further said: I will come down and talk with thee there; and I will take of the spirit which is upon thee, and will put it upon them; and they shall bear the burden of the people with thee, that thou bear it not thyself alone.

The above is doubtless the most clearly expressed case in the Old Testament, of a special act or decree on the part of God, setting apart or ordaining certain men called elders, to become co-operants in the government he was then establishing among his own people. Yet, in all this, we find no reference to the age, either relative or absolute, of these seventy elders. Tracing this word to New Testament usage, we shall expect, of course, to find it substantially the same as in the Old, unless there be some

decree to the contrary. Observe, therefore, in Matt. xxvii, 20, chief priests *and* elders; Mark xv, 1, the chief priests held a consultation *with* the elders. Luke xxii, 52, Jesus said to the captains and elders. Acts iv, 5, their rulers *and* elders were gathered together. Acts iv, 8, ye rulers of the people and elders of Israel. These scriptures abundantly show that from Genesis, at least, to the fourth chapter of Acts, the term elder has been used:

1. To express simply seniority in age, without regard to the number of years or days involved;

2. To refer to either male or female;

3. Has not been used to designate an office, unless expressed or clearly implied there had been some act of appointment to, or ordination for, that office.

There is but one scripture that even appears to be at variance with these conclusions, and that is in first Tim. v, 17. By this scripture it is sometimes claimed that the elders—because rulers—were the officers of the church. This, however, is easily understood, if it be remembered that Paul, in the same epistle, had just given Timothy instructions, both concerning the *office* which one might desire, and the character of the officer to fill that office. If, therefore, the term elder can have any force in that scripture, it only goes to show, that, being an elder, he had been ordained to the office of a bishop, and by virtue thereof had become a ruler in the house of God.

We are now ready to consider the question first proposed with regard to the Ephesian elders, viz.: Who were they before the Holy Spirit made them bishops? Elders, according to both Old and New Testament usage, were men who, not by virtue of any office already held, nor necessarily by virtue of their age, but by virtue of superior qualifications in character or position, were regarded proper persons to become, by ordination, bishops in the Christian Church. Such were, therefore, the Ephesian

elders, and accordingly the Holy Spirit made them bishops. When, therefore, we read of "ordaining elders in every city," it is not to be understood that certain *men* were ordained to be, or to become elders, but that certain elders were ordained to become bishops.

The more fully to understand this, let us now examine the word ordain. There are no less than *thirteen* terms in the Greek of the New Testament, which among a great variety of other translations, are also translated *ordain.* There will only be considered here, those which relate to the ordaining of elders: they are *cheirotoneo*, Acts xiv, 23; *tithemi*, Acts xx, 28; and *kathistemi*, Titus i, 5. The term in Acts xx, 28, is in that instance, however, translated *hath made*, though elsewhere it is translated *ordain.* The meaning of these words, is as follows: In Acts xiv, 23, where they had ordained them elders in every church, *cheirotoneo*, is used, and signifies to raise up and extend the hand; to vote by holding up the hand; to sanction by a vote. In Acts xx, 28, where it is declared of the Ephesian elders, that the Holy Spirit *hath made* them bishops, *tithemi*, is used, and signifies to cause; to make; to put; to place; to establish; to adopt, etc. In Titus i, 5, *kathistemi*, is used, and signifies substantially the same with *tithemi*, as to place; to appoint; to institute. These various terms, with their numerous significations, clearly indicate in their proper use, both action and passion; that is, they imply the necessity of two classes of persons, the active, to perform, and the passive to receive.

That the passive to receive, were already elders; that the transition act was called ordination; and that the bishoprick was the office to which they were ordained, have been abundantly shown. It only now remains, under this head, to show who were the active, to perform, that is, the agents of ordination. In Acts xiv, 23, it is said, that Paul and Barnabas were the agents. In Acts xx, 28,

it is said, that the Holy Spirit was the agent; and in Titus i, 5, it is said, Titus was the agent for appointing or ordaining elders. In all these scriptures, there is but one defining clause which is absolute, and that is found in Acts xx, 28, and is called the Holy Spirit. As scripture can not be contradictory of itself, it must follow in all cases, where an election to the office of bishop took place, it was done by the direction of the Holy Spirit, through the already existing proper agencies of the church; and that in modern phraseology, certain elders were the candidates for the office. The greater also, always includes the less; and as it is found, at the very threshold of this part of the subject, Acts xx, 28, that the Holy Spirit made certain elders bishops, nothing which follows can be supposed to change the fundamental principles upon which the main question rests. There are at least three conclusions to be drawn from the foregoing.

1. All concede the importance of beginning at the beginning; and if the *first* qualification of a Christian bishop can not be found, it would be in vain to seek for a character harmonious in all its parts. David can not wear Saul's armor; and, perhaps, one of the great, if not the greatest, hindrances to the cause of truth among us, is that we have been trying to make Pauls and Peters out of unlettered, narrow-minded, money-loving men, under the pompous title of the eldership!

2. It has been quite generally maintained that the elder is the officer, and the eldership the office, neither of which can be true, if the terms and their use and meaning have been correctly set forth above.

3. The idea of age—seniority in years—has generally been made a test question in selecting officers in the church, insomuch, that men are often chosen for elders, so called, who possess no other qualification; while men, by far their

juniors in years, are by so far their seniors in every other respect, and are really the true elders.

What other qualifications are requisite for a Christian bishop will be easily arrived at, because they are specially laid down by the apostles Paul and Peter. We, therefore, turn our attention to what they say upon the subject.

By examining the twentieth chapter of Acts—the third and fifth chapters of first Timothy—the first chapter of Titus, and the fifth chapter of the first epistle of Peter, there will be found at least *thirty* distinct specifications concerning the office and character of a Christian bishop. These will first be presented in the order in which they occur, beginning with Acts, and ending with Peter.

1. Take heed to yourselves.
2. Take heed to the flock of God.
3. Feed the Church of God.
4. A bishop must be blameless.
5. A bishop must be the husband of one wife.
6. A bishop must be vigilant.
7. A bishop must be sober.
8. A bishop must be of good behavior.
9. A bishop must be a lover of, and given to hospitality.
10. A bishop most be apt (*i. e.*, qualified) to teach.
11. A bishop must not be given to wine.
12. A bishop must be no striker (literally one who strikes or quarrels.)
13. A bishop must not be greedy of filthy lucre.
14. A bishop must be patient.
15. A bishop must not be a brawler.
16. A bishop must be one who ruleth his own house well.
17. A bishop must have his children—not unruly—in subjection.
18. A bishop must not be a novice.
19. A bishop must be of good report of them without.
20. A bishop must be one who rules well.

21. A bishop must not be self-willed.
22. A bishop must not be soon angry.
23. A bishop must be a lover of good men.
24. A bishop must be just.
25. A bishop must be holy.
26. A bishop must be temperate.
27. A bishop must be one holding fast the faithful word.
28. A bishop must be able both to exhort and convince the gainsayers.
29. A bishop must be taking the oversight of the flock willingly.
30. And bishops must be ensamples to the flock

These thirty specifications naturally divide themselves into two classes: Qualifications and Duties. These, in turn, again subdivide into two classes: positive and negative qualification, and positive and negative duties. By *positive* and *negative*, it is meant, that it is oftentimes as great a qualification for a given work, to *lack* one thing, as to *possess* another; and oftentimes as high a duty *not* to do some things as *to* do others. Dismissing for the present the duties, we return to the qualifications. These, as already stated, arrange themselves under two heads: things to possess, and things not to possess. There are *twenty* specifications of these two classes, and of the twenty, *thirteen* are positive, and *seven* negative. To get now a Christian bishop, with his qualifications, let us first select a man who is already an elder, in the proper use of that term: *ordain* him to the bishop's office, then arranging the *twenty* specifications in the order they best make up a character, say to the world, here is a man.

1. Not a novice.
2. Not soon angry.
3. Not self-willed.
4. Not given to wine.
5. Not a brawler.

6. Not a striker.
7. Not greedy of filthy lucre.

Say also to the world that he is:

1. The husband of one wife.
2. That he is of good behavior.
3. That he is vigilant.
4. That he is sober.
5. That he is patient.
6. That he is temperate.
7. That he is just.
8. That he is holy.
9. That he is a lover of, and given to hospitality.
10. That he is qualified to teach.
11. That he is able, both to exhort and convince the gainsayers.
12. That he is of good report among them without.
13. And that he is blameless.

Present these things to the world, and they complete the character of a bishop, so far as qualifications can go.

Of course, it is not expected that these qualifications will be separately discussed; nor, indeed, could it be done within the limits of a single discourse. One thing, however, may be noted before passing to the question of duties: It has generally been held almost, if not altogether, impossible to find a man possessing all those qualifications. In many instances, this is doubtless true, though it must not be put beyond the limits of Christian attainments to find them all centered in one man. But the difficulty, to whatever extent it may reach, may be generally, if not always, remedied. It is not to be supposed, in the above classification, that the apostles are so much describing the *officer*, as the *office*. Find, therefore, a man possessing the seven negative, and *one* positive qualification, and he may be a Christian bishop. Find another man, with the seven negative, and another of the positive, and he may be an-

other bishop. Continue thus until all the qualifications are brought into requisition, and the character is complete; or in other words, the bishop's office is filled. This doubtless gives the true solution of the vexed question, usually called the "plurality of the eldership."

We now turn our attention to the

DUITIES OF A CHRISTIAN BISHOP.

The apostles Paul and Peter give, as before stated, *ten* specifications under this head. These have already been subdivided into two classes, positive and negative; the doing and the not doing. Perhaps, however, the terms would better suit the classes, if they should be called primary and secondary duties; the primary relating to himself, the bishop; the secondary relating to his flock. Of those relating to himself, we have *five* specifications, as follows:

1. Take heed to yourselves.
2. Rule your own house well.
3. Have your children in subjection.
4. Hold fast the faithful word.
5. Be ensamples (examples) to the flock.

Of the duties which relate to the flock, and those without, we have also *five* specifications, as follows:

1. Be a lover of good men.
2. Take heed to the flock.
3. Take the oversight of the flock willingly
4. Feed the Church of God.
5. Rule well.

As it is often found difficult to find one man possessing all the qualifications of a bishop, so it may be equally difficult to find one capable of discharging all the duties. And, as in the qualifications, all of the first class must be possessed before a man can become a bishop; so in the duties, all that relate to the bishop himself, must be dis-

charged, before a man has any right to attempt the discharge of those relating to the flock.

The task of presenting the qualifications and duties of a Christian bishop, is now completed, and here we might pause; but before doing so, there are one or two of the duties set forth, to which special attention is invited.

1. BE ENSAMPLES TO THE FLOCK. There is so much comprehended in this duty, that its value can not be overestimated. The world is governed more by example than by precept. Inferiors imitate, or try to imitate their superiors. Children imitate their parents. Young men and women imitate their older associates. Old men and women follow in the footsteps of some remembered example of their early days. An example of suffering will cause men to smile in the midst of torture. An example of chivalrous valor will lead thousands to the deadly breach. An example of Christian heroism in death, will kindle the eye of the martyr at the stake with a radiant light, brighter than the fires that burn around him. The Christian looks for examples. He must have them; must have them too, here upon the earth; and though he looks to Christ as the great Shepherd and Bishop of his soul, yet Christ must be represented here upon the earth. The weak must see him here; the strong may see him by faith in the heavens; the strong must therefore become examples to the weak, and thus bear their burdens. A bishop must be a strong man; he must be able, like a good shepherd, to carry many little lambs in his arms, and gently lead the flock. He must be an example in good works; in liberality; in all the graces which adorn and beautify our human nature, and render it fit to dwell forever with God. Christ gave examples. We love good works, because he did them; we sympathize with the sorrowing, because Christ showed us how; we think it manly to weep, because "Jesus wept;" we *fear* not the cross, because Christ was crucified; we

triumph over death, because Christ arose from the dead. A bishop is the nearest representative of Christ on earth; and, therefore, like Christ, whether in joy or sorrow; whether in safety or persecution; whether among friends or foes; whether in life or in death, he must be an ensample to the flock. O! it is glorious in honor, but fearful in responsibility, to be a Christian bishop.

2. RULE WELL. So much has been said about "arbitrary power," in the church; so much about the "one man power;" and so much about authoritative synods, and councils, that vast numbers have entirely lost sight of the duty of a bishop to *rule well*. It may as well, however, be taken for granted, that no church can prosper very well, or very long, that is not ruled well; that does not have an authority in it, which is both known and felt. The churches mainly have endeavored to avoid this; they have appealed to the "dear people;" they have submitted questions to a promiscuous assembly of men, women, and children, that ought never to have passed beyond the council chamber of the wisest and best men in the church. Doubtless nine tenths of the "church difficulties"—a phrase almost a technicality among us—have arisen, either from the inability of the bishops to *rule well*, or from their disposition to shrink from their responsibilities and duties. Designing men also, always love to appeal to the mass, because, however wicked their plea, they can thus secure a party, and with a party divide the church. A little wholesome authority, firmly but kindly exercised, would generally "nip the evil in the bud"—save the cause disgrace—and keep stumbling blocks from the feet of sinners. With our ideas of a government, we are apt to run the church into the state. But it must be remembered, that Christ's government is neither republicanism nor democracy, but a monarchy, an absolute monarchy—Christ the Monarch; and that he has a specific organization here

upon the earth, with all the functions of a perfect government; that this government has Christ's representative rulers; and these rulers are the bishops. Let them, therefore, take heed to Paul's admonition, that they RULE WELL.

The character of the *rule*, is clearly indicated by Paul's question: If a man know not how to rule his own house, how can he rule the house of God? This implies not only the absolute right to rule, but that the rule should be with the firmness and tenderness of a father. In an ordinary family, a father will be ruler over all ages, from childhood to manhood; so in the church, a bishop will be ruler over "babes in Christ," as well as over "fathers and mothers in Israel." But though a father rule tenderly—very tenderly—his little child, still he is its ruler; and though he rule firmly—even severely—his wayward son, yet he is his ruler. And thus a Christian bishop, taking his first lessons in the family nursery, learns to unite the firmness of the monarch with the gentleness of a child, by the which he confirms the wavering, strengthens the weak, bears up the bowed down, convinces the gainsayers, stops the mouth of scoffers, and rules the church well. There are times when a shepherd must move among his flock with noiseless tread, and lead each lamb with gentle hand; there are other times when he must move in the might of his strength, tear off the stolen garments, and crush the wolf. There was a time when Christ wept bitter tears over his Father's house; there was another time, when, as with a whip of scorpions, he scourged the intruders, broke up the den of thieves, and purified the holy temple. So must the bishop rule, that he will keep the temple pure, the body sanctified, the church without spot or blemish. So must he live, that his rule will come more from the heart, than from merely vested power. So must he love his flock, that he would be willing to lay down his life, rather than a single *lamb* should fail to enter the eternal fold. Nor will such

authority be feared, only as those who love, also fear; nor will such rule be regarded as arbitrary, only by those unworthy of fellowship. Such a bishop, ruling thus, is in the brightest office of earth. And when his work is ended; when he shall have delivered up his flock to the great Shepherd and Bishop of all souls, he will receive a crown of splendor and beauty, by the side of which, the richest diadems of earth will pale and fade into wondrous insignificance, and eternal nothingness; a crown as glorious as the light of immortality; yielding the fullness of joy as God is full of love, and enduring as the compass of his years, who inhabiteth eternity, and liveth forever and forever.

SERMON XVIII.

POWER OF THE GOSPEL.

BY A. D. FILLMORE.

"For I am not ashamed of the Gospel of Christ; for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth.—Rom. i, 16.

In the creation of things there was manifestly a supreme power, which being put forth through proper agencies and means, brought forth "the things that are seen." And as it was in the material, so it is in the spiritual. When there is to be a re-creation or regeneration of man, there is required a supreme power, and divine agencies and means to accomplish the work. These are revealed in the gospel of Christ, and the regeneration of the world is the work to be accomplished. Paul, whose heart was filled with the love of Christ, and whose soul was moved by the spirit of god-like philanthropy, goes forth as a herald of the gospel, a messenger of salvation to a lost world. If he meet the poor by the wayside, or the rich in his palace; the laborer in the field, or the sailor upon the ocean; the ignorant barbarian, or the profound philosopher; the Jew in the synagogue, or the Gentile in the heathen temple; the lowest civilian, or the officer of highest rank; to all alike, "both small and great," he proclaims the gospel as the power of God—the proclamation of pardon and salvation by Jesus Christ. Whether he stood in the court of Areopagus, before the Sanhedrim, or the Emperor Augustus, his plea was uniformly, "I am set for the defense of the *gospel.*"

And when the fires of persecution were kindled all around him, when betrayed by false brethren, when both the political and religious authorities conspired to compel him to cease preaching the gospel, he faltered not; but, like Abraham, the father of the faithful, he trusted the promise of God, that those who believe in Christ, the "Rock in Zion," shall not be put to shame. (Isa. xxviii, 16.) The same superhuman heroism with which the gospel inspired him in the trials and conflicts of life; sustained him and gave him glorious victory in the final encounter with the last enemy, death. Looking forward to the resurrection morn, he says: "Thanks be to God, who gives us the victory, through our Lord Jesus Christ." "I am now ready to be offered, and the time of my departure is at hand. I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith; henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness which the Lord, the righteous judge, shall give me in that day." 2 Tim. vi, 8.

Paul's great anxiety to preach the gospel everywhere, to all people, without respect to persons, is prominently set forth in the context. And his appeal to Cæsar, by which he availed himself of the means of government transportation to help him on his way, as a missionary, to Rome, Spain, and perhaps other points in the "great west," is in striking contrast with the course of modern murmurers and complainers, who are incessantly finding fault with different missionary societies, and objecting to all the various plans adopted for the purpose of obtaining means to carry the gospel to all the world. If the precept and example of Paul should obtain a lodgment in their little souls, the rebuke would be overwhelming. Those who are under the influence of the full appreciation of the high and heavenly motives of the gospel, instead of standing in the way of the appropriation of all the means which both the church and the world will bestow, would, if possible,

message of love to our fallen race, embracing the transcendently-glorious scheme of redemption in all its facts, commandments, and promises, by which we are saved from sin.

II. Man's first and greatest means of communication, power and influence is by his word. In this, man bears the image of God. The pre-eminent manifestation of God's power in gospel influence is by his word through Christ. "As the rain cometh down, and the snow from heaven, and returneth not thither, but watereth the earth, and maketh it bring forth and bud, that it may give seed to the sower, and bread to the eater; so shall my word be that goeth forth out of my mouth; it shall not return unto me void; but it shall accomplish that which I please, and it shall prosper in the thing whereunto I sent it." Isa. lv, 10, 11. This prophecy is fulfilled in the coming of the great Messiah, who brings us the message of mercy and pardon. He who is the "WORD," that was in the beginning with God, is our Immanuel.

When the world was in darkness, Jesus, the sun of righteousness arose with effulgent beams of gospel day. When the cloudy night enshrouded all in the murky shadows of sin, the opening heavens were illuminated, and earth's horizon made radiant by the "star of the east," pointing to Bethlehem where Jesus was born. When man by wisdom knew not God, he gave us a revelation of himself in the person of his Son. He is "the brightness of the Father's glory, and the express image of his person." "In him dwelt the fullness of the Godhead bodily." He says, "As long as I am in the world, I am the light of the world.' "He was the true light, to enlighten every man that comes into the world." Jesus brings to man "The words of eternal life." Not his own word, but that which his Father gave him and sent him to declare.

Supreme power was delegated to him, all, both in heaven

and on earth. Matt. xxviii, 18. In this, then, he is, in the true sense of the word, the Lord, Christ. Since God has "in these last days" spoken unto us by his Son, shall we not hearken with reverence to the word of his power, submit to his high commands, and crown him Lord of all? How glorious his condescension to rebellious man! With what loud and joyful songs of gratitude and admiration should we praise him, who, though exalted at the right hand of the Majesty on high—the King of kings, and Lord of lords, to whom is given a name that is above every name in the universe—that he should deign to recognize us as citizens of his kingdom, and be our Lord and Saviour, Jesus Christ! O, the depth and hight, and length and breadth of his wonderful love

> "Angels assist our mighty joys,
> Strike all your harps of gold;
> But when you raise your highest notes,
> His love can ne'er be told."

2. But there is another rank of official agency, which is subordinate to Jesus, the great commander of the Israel of God, under the gospel dispensation. As when Moses spake the word of God to Israel in Egypt, and when refused a hearing, he called his brother Aaron to his aid, and gave to him the gospel message of their deliverance from bondage, and possession of Canaan; so Christ, when "he came to his own, and his own received him not," called his apostles, and gave to them the word of the Father—the gospel of our salvation from the bondage of sin, and the promise of our everlasting Canaan beyond the Jordan of death. After the people said, "Away with him, we will not have this man to reign over us;" after they had crucified him, and God had raised him from the dead, he said to his apostles, "Go, teach all nations—preach the gospel to every creature—as my Father hath sent me,

even so send I you—he that receiveth you receiveth me." These words of commission show us the authority of the apostles, as corresponding to that of Jesus himself. "He breathed on them and said, Receive ye the Holy Spirit, whosesoever sins you remit, they are remitted," etc.

But he commanded them to tarry in the city of Jerusalem until they were endued with power from on high. And again, "They said to him, wilt thou at this time restore the kingdom to Israel?" and he replied, "You shall receive power, after that the Holy Spirit is come upon you."

They waited in Jerusalem, as commanded, till the power came, and on Pentecost the spiritual dispensation began. In this occurrence the apostles are as lips and tongues, by which the Holy Spirit speaks forth, with divine energy and power, the word of God, so that through the proclamation of the word of truth, the Spirit operated on the hearts of sinners, to the conviction and conversion of about three thousand in a single day.

3. We see, now, that the apostles do not stand next in the order of agencies to the Son of God, but they are subordinate to the power of the Holy Spirit. As Peter said, "Christ hath shed forth this, which you now see and hear." And as Paul says of himself and his fellow-apostles, "We are able ministers of the New Testament; not of the letter, but of the Spirit." Not of the law of Moses, the ministration of death; but of the spiritual institution, the gospel, which grants pardon and life. The apostles preached not, then, by their own power or ability, "but by the power of the Holy Spirit sent down from heaven."

The divine order of gospel agencies in the exhibition of gospel power is, then—*First*, Jesus, speaking the eternal and omnipotent word of instruction and authority. *Second*, The Holy Spirit, which is the soul, or life power of all divine manifestations. *Third*, The apostles, clothed with

the mantle of authority, with which Jesus himself was invested by the Father, in his mission to the world.

These apostles of our Lord, standing up before the people, spake "as the Spirit gave them utterance." They justly claim that to them is committed the word of reconciliation; and, therefore, as ambassadors, ministers plenipotentiary, they, in Christ's stead, plead with alienated sinners to be reconciled to God. He that rejects the gospel, as preached by apostles, rejects the Holy Spirit—rejects Christ the Son of God, and rejects God himself! "If they escaped not, who turned away from him who spake on earth," Moses; "much more shall not we escape, if we turn away from him that speaketh from heaven."

4. But again: Since the apostles have finished the work which the Master gave them to do, and have entered into their rest, realizing the blessedness of being happy with the Lord, the word of the gospel has been committed to other faithful men, called evangelists, who are "able to teach others also." So these evangelists, by studying the word of truth, qualify themselves to preach "the same things" which apostles preached, stand in the *fourth* rank of agencies, in exhibiting the gospel as the power of God. Though not in any proper sense of the word "called of God, as was Aaron," nor in any respect supernaturally qualified to fill the measure of apostolic ambassadorship, as is claimed by the priesthood of the apostacy, yet, by the study of the sacred oracles of prophetic and apostolic teaching, they become "workmen that need not to be ashamed rightly dividing the word of truth," and "approved unto God." And by continuing in "the same things," learned of the apostles, they are able both to save themselves and those that hear them, and give heed to their preaching. By meditating on these things, and giving themselves wholly to them, they become "men of God," and may be "perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works."

In Paul's letters to Timothy and Titus, the authority, dignity, and responsibility of the evangelist's office are amply set forth, demonstrating the absolute necessity of men being set apart for the work of the ministry, who shall be patterns of godliness, and examples to the believers in all things. That they should be respected by the brethren, and be amply sustained by them, not only in preaching to the churches, as did Paul and Peter, and in taking care of the flock; but also be efficiently helped on their way, as they go forth to evangelize the world.

It is a sad misfortune, that in some cases, wily usurpers have crept in unawares, and have lorded it over God's heritage—wolves in sheep's clothing, and have destroyed the flock, insomuch that the people have, to a great extent, lost all proper respect for the ministry. And the unchristian usurpations of some, have led many people to fear, lest any authoritative power put into the hands of preachers, would be abused. And worse still, is the hiding of the light of the glorious gospel, when so many Sampson's suffer themselves to be shorn of their ministerial power, by the Delilah's of our day, in the garb of political leaders. Here ambitious and unscrupulous emissaries of Satan, who only care for the success of party, which promises them honor and emolument, are ever on the alert to secure the influence of the preachers to be brought to the aid of their party, by preaching particular things, with peculiar emphasis—which things are often prime principles of gospel righteousness, though only adopted by the political party as a hypocritical policy for availibility. Or upon the other hand, if the party has determined that in order to gain the influence of the ungodly, they must adopt the most obviously degrading principles of unrighteousness, they are even more ready than in the other case to dictate to the preacher, what part of the gospel he may *preach*, and what part he must ignore, and keep back from

the people. In both cases, if the preacher gives heed to them, the word of God is blasphemed, and the gospel can not "run and be glorified," because the preacher has been beguiled by the spirit of party politics, and is not led by the Spirit of Christ. In the former case, he is a mere tool in the hands of wicked men, and in the latter, he is emphatically a *political preacher*, standing out in the light of scripture, as a "*dumb dog*." And in both cases, those who use him, do so to promote their own selfish purposes, and care not a fig what becomes of the preacher, or the cause of God.

The preacher should be a Joshua to the people of God, and lead on the host of the Lord, in victorious conquest over the world, the flesh and the devil. He must wield "the sword of the Spirit"—"preach the word—declare the whole counsel of God, be instant in season, out of season, reprove, rebuke and exhort with all long suffering and doctrine." Then shall he be indeed a wise and powerful agent in the hands of God, turning many to righteousness. His power shall glow as the firmament, and his influence and glory shine out as the stars forever and ever.

5. To the church, is assigned the position of gospel agency, in the fifth place, by which this divine power is brought to bear upon the world. As "the Bride, the Lamb's wife," she is clothed with the garments of righteousness and beauty, without a spot or wrinkle. Queen of earth and heaven, she is adored by angels, wins the homage of kings, and by the power of love's scepter, subdues the nations. As the body of Christ, under the divine headship of Immanuel, every member is animated by the Holy Spirit, and energized with power and readiness to every good word and work.

Jesus taught his disciples that they should be built up together, compactly and in order, like a city, and thus be the "light of the world." And while each member should

let his, or her light shine before men, so as to be a powerful agent to influence men to glorify God; collectively, as a congregation, they should be as a metropolitan power to all the nations. Therefore, in the Sermon on the Mount, he also taught them, that, as disciples, they were the salt of the earth—the saving power of the earth.

In the sixteenth chapter of Matthew, Jesus informs the disciples that he would build his church upon the divine creed, or "confession of faith," that he is "the Christ, the Son of the living God," and that no power, even of *hades*, could prevail against it. The design of gathering the people of God together all in one, under Christ, was purposed by God from all eternity, in order to make known his almighty power, glory, and grace, in the whole universe. See a development of this theme, in the first three chapters of the Ephesians' letter. Paul says, in the same letter, "He has quickened us together in a heavenly state, in Christ Jesus, that in the ages to come, he might show the exceeding riches of his grace." "To the intent, that now, *by the church*, might be made known, to principalities and powers in heavenly places, the manifold wisdom of God."

In the Temple of Solomon, where God condescended to meet, and bless, and dwell with his people, and which was adorned with so much splendor, as to become a power to compel the homage of kings and queens of even the uttermost parts of the earth, we behold a beautiful type of the Church of Christ. As the temple showed the power, wisdom, and wealth of the king of Israel, so the Church of Christ exhibits to the world, the grandeur, wisdom, power, and glory that attaches to our King in Zion. But just here, with a little reflection, we are compelled to lament the blighting curse of sectarianism. Infidelity runs riot over the land, and the world looks with contempt upon the so called church, built up in the power of six

hundred little rival establishments, each upon a different site, chosen by the wisdom of man, and each erected according to a different plan of architecture, instead of one glorious temple, fitly framed together, on the hill of the Lord, built under the guiding wisdom of him who is crowned both Lord and Messiah.

There is but one remedy for all the evils of sectarianism. All who love the Lord must pray, preach, and practice more and more strictly in accordance with *the gospel as preached by apostles*, until we can "see how good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity." We must have the mind of Christ, and be animated by the spirit that prompted him to bleed and die for us, that we might all be one in him—all that believe on him through the word preached by his apostles. Not one, in the opinions and doctrines of men.

The church will never be seen in its true light, nor prove an efficient agent of gospel power to the world, until it is made to appear as one building, on "the one foundation"—the rock Christ Jesus, which God has laid in Zion. Never, until we put away all party names of human origin, for distinguishing and perpetuating party sects. Never, until we put away all humanly devised creeds, and party platforms, and rally together under the banner of the Lord, upon the word of God alone.

Every member of the church has at least one talent, and some have ten. These all belong to the Lord; and he has not given them to us, to use as we please for ourselves; but he has lent them to us, so that we may all be exalted to the high privilege of being "laborers together with the Lord." There is no excellency without labor. All the wakeful moments of life, are filled up with actions. All actions are manifestations of power; and they all have weight of influence in the balances of good and evil. Every thought, word, and action, exerts some power, either

directly or indirectly, to make the gospel shine out brightly to the world, or to dim its luster. "He that gathers not with me, scatters abroad," said the Master. How fearful the thought, that we are all laboring for the salvation of the world, by the gospel of Christ; or helping mankind hurriedly to perdition, by other appliances. Jesus said to his disciples, in illustrating the parable of the *true vine;* "Herein is my Father glorified, that you bear much fruit." The chief end of man is, truly, to glorify God, and to enjoy him forever. This is what it is, to enjoy religion—to know and practice godliness—to do much good. Man is not blessed and saved, in *believing* only, nor in *saying*, nor in *doing* only, but in saying and doing much by faith. The Christian's tongue should be large and active, but his hand should be larger and more active. His good conduct should shine out prominently, winning good will and approbation from all lovers of righteousness, and putting to shame all the evil deeds of the ungodly.

Tens of thousands of our church members, and many entire churches are being weighed down until the very life is being crushed out of them by the sin of covetousness. They can not be taught, and will not be converted from their idolatrous worship of Mammon. And as sure as Dives had his good things in this life, but afterward was found destitute and suffering amid the tortures of hell; so sure must their destiny be the same. We may say, in conclusion, under this head, that all the talents and means possessed by the church should be consecrated to the service of the Lord. All the powers of soul, body, and spirit should be sanctified. It is a reasonable service, and requires that the whole person be given to God.

If a member of the church is gifted with the power of song, as his or her particular talent (and all have it in some degree), let it be cultivated to best possible extent, so that all meetings for public and social worship shall be

made cheerful by the songs of Zion. So full of joy and gratitude should every heart be, and so rich and grand the full chorus of harmony, which the united voice of every congregation should raise, that sinners would be overwhelmed and captivated by gospel grace. If one member have great power of speech, whether adapted especially to argument, rhetoric, oratory, exhortation, or teaching, let his talent be developed and improved by exercise to best possible degree, and devoted to the furtherance of the gospel. Let those who are well adapted to business matters in the various honorable avocations, be diligent therein, not striving to lay up treasure in this world, but let them be industrious and accumulate all they can honorably in the sight of God and all men, that they may have much to bestow upon the poor and needy, and in behalf of the church ready to communicate to the full degree according to the prosperity which God grants them—not annually or occasionally, but from week to week. Let it be the most anxious thought constantly, how can I accomplish the most in the work of him who was rich, and yet for our sakes became poor, that we through his poverty might be rich; sincerely singing, on our pilgrimage through life,

"What glad return can I impart
For favors so divine?"

III. In the third chapter of our subject, we are to consider the effect accomplished by the power of the gospel. The text says, "It is the power of God unto salvation." And the question immediately arises, What are we to be saved from? And the further question, *How* and *wherein* is the gospel of Christ efficacious to save us from a lost state of sin and its consequences?

Since the fall, man is woefully depraved in sin, subject to death and the grave. And we are assured that no power but that of God is competent to redeem and save him from the

dominion of this trinity of powers. But we are assured that this power is vouchsafed in the gospel "to every one that believeth, both Jew and Greek." But can we understand the mode of operation by which God proposes to effect our salvation by the gospel? Some mystify the matter, and blind the minds of the people by answering and arguing in the negative. They virtually deny the truth of the context, which says that the gospel is God's power for salvation, because it reveals something. But these mystic teachers apply to us here the statement, "The wind bloweth where it listeth, and you hear the sound of it, but can not tell whence it cometh and whither it goeth," etc. By this sort of argument the inquiring mind is made oblivious to the truth that the power for salvation is in the word of the gospel preached by the apostles. And hence Nicodemus, with all his Pharisaic prejudices, could not understand the nature of Christ's kingdom before it was instituted, even before its elementary principles were fully developed; we are set back in the same dark cloud of ignorance, and our eyes are closed to the light of apostolic teaching and example. In this condition multitudes wait, year after year, for the display of some irresistible and incomprehensible power of the abstract Spirit to effect their salvation. Such persons are, on the one hand, liable to become utterly skeptical; and on the other, to be deceived by some nocturnal vagary from dreamland, or some other equally foolish hallucination, which they will adopt as the evidence of their salvation from sin, and a reason of the hope of heaven.

Instead of thus turning from the light of the truth of the word of God, we must hearken diligently to the preaching and teaching of apostles, and in so doing be led by the Spirit of truth. As John says, "He that hears us (apostles) is of God, and he that hears not us, is not of God. Hereby we know the Spirit of truth, and the Spirit

of error." 1 John iv, 6. The context declares that "the gospel is the power of God unto salvation, because it reveals God's righteousness, from faith to faith;" or more intelligibly rendered, "God's plan of justification by faith, in order to faith." The gospel, then, is God's power for salvation, because it makes known how God will justify or pardon those who believe; and this revelation or preaching the word of the gospel is in order to faith. Faith comes by hearing the word of God. We are justified by faith. And it has "pleased God by the foolishness of preaching to save them that believe." 1 Cor. ii.

In the fifteenth chapter of the first Corinthians we have a definite statement of the gospel, in fact, as preached by the apostles, viz.: "That Christ died for our sins according to the scriptures, and that he was buried, and that he rose from the dead the third day, according to the scriptures." These facts, demonstrated before the people by signs and wonders, and divers gifts of the Holy Spirit, so wrought upon their minds and hearts as to gain their confidence, win their affections, and compel their "obedience to the faith." And when the people thus believed "with all the heart," they were commanded to "repent and be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ, for the remission of sins." Acts ii, 38.

The references made to the converted, by the apostles in their epistles, show conclusively, that those who believed in Christ, obeyed the Gospel in order to salvation, or pardon of sins. This is amply illustrated in Rom. vi, where the apostle speaks of the fact of their being saved from sin. He says: "Know ye not, that so many of us as were baptized into Jesus Christ, were baptized into his death? Therefore, we have been buried with him by baptism into death: that like as Christ was, raised up from the dead, by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life." And farther, as in the

same chapter, he says: "But ye have obeyed from the heart that form of doctrine, which was delivered you; being then made free from sin, ye became the servants of righteousness." This teaching of the apostle shows clearly that these persons had become dead to sin, and alive to God, by becoming obedient to the faith; the form of doctrine, corresponding to the facts of the Gospel—the death, burial and resurrection of Christ.

Again: In the same chapter, the apostle says: "If we have been planted together in the likeness of his death, we shall be also in the likeness of his resurrection." All this, in connection with the same kind of teaching in Paul's letter to the Collossians, leaves us in no doubt in regard to what is the proper action, and design of baptism. No real ground of controversy is left.

With the apostles, baptism was a planting, burial, or immersion; and the design of this obedience "from the heart," was "for the remission of sins." When we learn the story of the love of Jesus, giving himself to die for us, we are constrained, by the power of love, to come to the cross, and with true penitence of soul to say, "Lord, what wilt thou have me to do?" Thus, changed in heart, we are required, not only to cease our disobedience to God, but, in order to a new state, we must step out of disobedience into actual obedience to the Gospel. In obeying the Gospel, we are baptized into Christ, "in whom we have redemption through his blood—the forgiveness of sins—according to the riches of his grace." (Eph. i, 7.) Being then justified by faith in Christ, we have the promise of his Holy Spirit, to bear witness with our spirit that we are adopted children of God. And by his spirit we are to be led on in the highway of holiness—to final and eternal salvation. Paul says of Christ: "And being made perfect through suffering, he has become the author of eternal *salvation, to* all them that obey him." (Heb. v.) Peter

says, in first chapter, second epistle, of those who had obtained like precious faith with the apostles, and had thus escaped the corruptions that are in the world through lust, that if they add to this faith, courage, knowledge, temperance, patience, godliness, brotherly kindness, charity, they shall, at the end of their pilgrimage, have an abundant entrance ministered to them into the everlasting kingdom of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.

SERMON XIX.

HIS BODY—THE CHURCH.

BY GEORGE CAMPBELL.

"For by one Spirit are we all baptized into one body, whether we be Jews or Gentiles, whether we be bond or free: and have been all made to drink into one Spirit." (1 Cor. xii, 13.)

THIS language of the great apostle to the Gentiles, is found in his treatise on *spiritual gifts*, contained in the 12th, 13th and 14th chapters of his first epistle to the Church of God, in the great Gentile city of Corinth, a church which he had, during his ministry, planted, and placed upon the true foundation of God.—"The foundation of apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner stone." He had laid the foundation, and though other ministers had built thereon, yet "no man," he said, "could lay any other than that which is laid, even Jesus the Christ." (1 Cor iii, 11.) The church, thus founded, and built of true and genuine material, such as "gold, silver, and precious stones," so as to be a genuine, spiritual, fire-proof temple, is, "*the one body* of Christ." "His habitation by the Spirit," and "the fulness (*to pleroma—the completeness*) of him that filleth all in all." This is "*the new creation*,"—"the glory of Christ."

In treating upon the subject before us, I propose the following order, viz:

I. Treating of "the one body."

II. The Lord's way of initiating members into this "one body;" and

III. Of the influx, indwelling, and "communion of the Holy Spirit."

I. And first, we ask your careful and prayerful attention to the only one body—the Church of the living God.

1. This church is composed of converts from both Jews and Gentiles. It is a new creation in Christ Jesus. But these members, before their *conversion*, and new birth, were ungodly and sinners—"Jews and Gentiles"—"the bond and free." But now they are no more, "Jews nor Gentiles," "bond nor free," but all make one new body—or community—new-born children, by "faith in Christ Jesus"—the true "Israel of God"—"Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise." "Of the twain (Jews and Gentiles) the Lord has thus constituted one new man, or community, and so made peace." Such is the true Church of Christ.

2. The Church, or body of Christ *is a unit.* It is verily "one from many"—"many united in one"—a religious "E PLURIBUS UNUM," presenting "the unity of the Spirit, in the bond of peace," most perfectly. "There is one body, and one spirit, even as ye are called in one hope of your calling; one Lord, one faith, one baptism; one God and Father of all; who is above all, through all, and in you all." (Eph. iv, 1–6.) This unity, it is the duty of all Christians, in all meekness and lowliness and humility, to use every possible endeavor to keep, forbearing and edifying one another in the love of Christ.

3. The church is a *spiritual* body. The members are built up together, a *spiritual house*—the habitation of God by the Spirit. It is the temple of the *Holy Spirit.* When this new body, or new man in Christ, was created, the Creator breathed into it the breath of divine life, and it became a living *soul* or being. The Holy Spirit, by which the Lord inspired his body, on the day of Pentecost, is *the life*, the *soul* of this new man in Christ Jesus. Thus

the church is alive, and all its true members are "spiritually minded." It is not a dead body without a spirit; but its spirit is the *Holy Guest.*

4. The church is a holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God by Jesus Christ, a peculiar people, zealous of good works; a chosen generation, a royal priesthood; a holy nation; that they should show forth the virtues or perfections of him, "who hath called them out of darkness into his marvelous light." 1 Pet. v, 9. Christ is the royal or High Priest, and all his members are royal priests under him, their enthroned Head. Our King and High Priest was enthroned when our blessed Lord ascended from Olivet, and was glorified as the Lord of all—was then sworn into the office of High Priest after the order of Melchisedec; the priesthood was then changed, and being changed, there was made also of necessity a change of the law. Heb. vii, 12. All things are to be done, under the reign of our King and High Priest, not by the law of Moses, but by "the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus." Not by the law of a carnal commandment, but "by the power of an endless life."

5. The Church of Christ is composed of a people "*called out* from the world, and raised up apparently from the dead," and "set down together in heavenly places, in Christ, the Saviour." *Dead, buried,* and *raised* again. The name given to them, as an organization, signifies that they are thus *called out.* The Greek name for church is *Ekklesia,* which is from two words that signify, in their ecclesiastical use when compounded, *a people called out.* Another name is applied to them as an assembly (James ii, 2), viz.: *Sunagogee,* anglicised, *synagogue,* compounded of words that signify *assembled together.* So we see, that the church is a peculiar people, *called out* and *assembled together* in Christ. They are "called by the gospel," which was revealed by the Spirit, hence a spiritual voca-

tion. Hence the sacredness and holiness of the Christian calling. Their unity and communion together also is the unity and communion of the Holy Spirit. Every thing in the Christian economy is spiritual, for it is all by the power and guidance of the Holy Spirit from God.

6. This new creation began at Jerusalem, at the opening of the new covenant dispensation. This people were *called out* by the gospel preached by the apostles, under his commission to begin at Jerusalem, which beginning was on the day of Pentecost, the fiftieth day from the sacrifice of "our Passover that was slain for us." This is the antitype of the old Pentecost at Mt. Sinai. Materials for this new organization or temple were being prepared from the time of the baptism which John the Baptist preached; but there was no organization till the day of Pentecost. Here the new body was prepared to receive its spirit. There the infant church began, as a living, acting organization, just when and where Christ's prime ministers received the promise of the baptism of the Holy Spirit. Here was the descent of the divine power to form the new creation. It is a new church. "Upon this rock I will build my church," not *I have built*, but "*I will build* my church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it." Matt. xvi, 18. The old covenant died with his death, and the *new* began, after his resurrection, at the Pentecost.

7. The church is "the light of the world," and "the salt of the earth." And by it the Lord would show in the ages to come the exceeding riches of his grace, and even make known to the principalities and powers in the heavenly regions, by the church, the manifold wisdom of God; and thus ultimately light up all the heavens and earth with his glory. It is the object of our Lord's greatest love on earth, and the earth is only allowed to stand for its sake. When the earth is no longer fit for the church's progress, God will destroy it and make a new earth. The kings of

the church is alive, and all its true members are "spiritually minded." It is not a dead body without a spirit; but its spirit is the *Holy Guest.*

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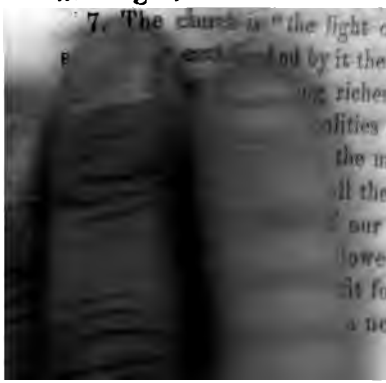

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the earth and all rulers shall at length bring their treasures and glories into it, and by it the earth shall be filled with the knowledge, glory, and blessedness of Jehovah, as the waters cover the bosom of the great deep. Our Saviour is so united and identified with this body, that whatever we do to any member of it he receives as having been done to himself. "Inasmuch," saith Jesus, "as ye have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto me." Matt. xxv.

We can, by feeding, and clothing, and doing acts of kindness to the humblest member of the church, thereby feed and clothe, and do good to the Redeemer himself. And if we do any harm to any one of these members, we do it unto Christ. *Woe! to him that doeth it!* The highest descriptions of excellency, dignity, honor, purity, perfection, and bliss, ever given in human language, is used by the Holy Spirit in the living oracles in reference to the church and its glorious Head. Even the Apocalyptic descriptions of the heavenly Jerusalem are but a delineation of the church in ultimate exaltation and glory, and perfect blessedness.

II. We now come to inquire as to the appointed *way or method of initiation of new members into the church.*

The church, as Christ's kingdom, must have had this point specially stated or it could have received no members as volunteers. And according to the inspired one hundred and tenth Psalm, which is the Holy Spirit's authoritative enunciation of his reign as our Royal High Priest, his subjects must be volunteers, "*willing people* in his service in the day of his dominion." And this is more evident from the fact that sinners are commanded, persuaded, and exhorted, in all the scriptures, to come of choice and serve him, to "*yield themselves servants to obey him.*" This could not be, unless there was a plain way revealed of admission into his reign for volunteers. It

must be plain and practicable. It is so plain that all denominations agree that the initiation is by baptism; that the true believer in Christ is by baptism inducted into membership. We see in the text that "we are all baptized into one body." Again, "As many of you as have been baptized into Christ, have put on Christ." Gal. iii, 27. Of the converts on Pentecost it is said, "Then they that gladly received his word (Peter's), *were baptized*," Acts ii, 41, and the same day were added to the disciples. And of the Corinthians it is said, "Many of the Corinthians, hearing, believed, and *were baptized*." Acts xviii, 8. So of all the converts, according to the Lord's commission to his apostles, "Go teach all nations, *baptizing* them." And again, "He that believeth and is *baptized* shall be saved." Matt. xxviii, 19, and Mark xvi, 16. Nothing can be more specific and plain. So all parties and creeds agree, that the *form* of induction is *baptism*. And yet, after all, we are far from being all agreed in this matter. We disagree mainly on these two points, to-wit: as to the *subjects* and *nature* of Christian baptism.

As to the *subjects*, we all agree, that believers are proper subjects. But many hold that unbelieving infants of believing parents should be baptized, *or rather*, *rantized*. Now, as nothing is laid down in the law of the Lord, *enjoining* the baptism, or rantism of infants; nor *any thing* said of it, either by way of *example* or precept; and as it is contrary to the principle, that all volunteer in our Lord's service, I will say nothing further in reference to it. On the *nature* of baptism, as referred to in our text, it is now generally agreed, that it is *baptism in water*, which the Lord commanded his apostles to administer to believers, who should volunteer to become members of his church, or kingdom. Some, however, dissent, and on the contrary, maintain that it is "the baptism of the Holy Spirit," which our Lord *promised* his disciples, that *really* con-

stitutes membership, or that the Lord himself baptized us into his body, *in* the Holy Spirit. Many of these would render the passage thus: "*In* one Spirit," rather than "*By* one Spirit." This view of the meaning of the text, as Dr. Bloomfield says, is "contrary to the interpretation adopted by almost all commentators, both *ancient* and *modern*, who suppose in the passage, an allusion to the two sacraments" (viz.: water baptism, and the Lord's supper). "By being baptized," say they, "we are all made members of the body of Christ, and united one to another under him, our Head; and thus, whether Jews or Gentiles, bond or free, we are all one in Christ, who, by baptism, have been admitted into his church; and this union of ours, one with another, is testified and declared by our communion at the Lord's table,,which is here called "*a drinking into one Spirit*," referring to the sacramental cup." (See Bloomfield, *Com. in loco*, 2nd vol., page 148).

With this agrees Dr. John Locke, on this passage, in his Commentary. And similar is the view of the great mass of the older commentators. In the above extract, from Bloomfield, will be found terms in regard to "*sacraments*," etc., not purely of Canaan, but rather Ashdodic; still it seems to me that the view taken, in its general sense, is a common sense view. In settling the question, whether the initiation into the church is by the baptism of the Holy Spirit, or by baptism in literal water, I first inquire, whether the initiatory baptism is a *command*, an ordinance, or a *promise?* If it is a promise, then it is Holy Spirit baptism; but if it is an *ordinance*, then it is *water baptism.* Because the baptism of the Holy Spirit was never *commanded*, or imposed as an *ordinance*, but is always referred to by our Lord, as a *promise.* (Acts i, 4, *et al*). But baptism in water, is a commandment. Now, let the induction of Jewish converts on the day of Pentecost, at the

beginning, and of the Gentile converts, at first, at the house of Cornelius, decide the point.

The baptism of the Jewish converts, at Pentecost, was certainly *commanded;* and, therefore, it was "water baptism." The word is in the form of a command, "Repent and *be baptized* every one of you, in the name (by the authority of) of Jesus Christ, for the remission of sins," and then comes the *promise* of "the gift of the Holy Spirit," after the command is obeyed. As sure as repentance is a commandment, so sure is the baptism a command, by which they put on Christ, and entered his church, and drank in the Spirit. They were, in voluntary obedience, baptized, in order to receive the Holy Spirit, as the advocate, or "*Paraclete*," and not *in* the Holy Spirit, as the baptismal element.

At the house of Cornelius, Peter "*commanded* them to be baptized in the name of the Lord," just as he did the believers, on the day of Pentecost. This too he *commanded*, after they had received the *promised* baptism of the Holy Spirit. The two baptisms were distinct, as to time, circumstance, and design. One was to prepare the way for the other. By the baptism of the Holy Spirit, our Lord bore testimony in behalf of the reception of the Gentiles, by giving them the same gift he had given the Jewish converts, "at the beginning," at Jerusalem, and then Peter was authorized to say to his six Jewish brethren, who came down with him from Joppa, "*can any man* forbid *water*, that these should not be baptized, who have received the Holy Spirit as well as we?" We see then, that the Jewish and Gentile converts, were both inducted into Christ's church by baptism in water, which they *obeyed*; and not by the baptism of the Holy Spirit, which was received as a *promise*. We can not obey a *promise!* The initiatory baptism was an *ordinance*, which they were commanded to obey. But the baptism of the Holy Spirit,

was a great *promise*, fulfilled by splendid and transcendent miracles, administered by our glorified King himself, and for which he commanded his disciples to wait until his time to *give*, and their time to *receive*.

The design of the baptism of the Holy Spirit, shows that it was not initiatory. It was the Lord's direct witness, to confirm, establish and perfect the apostle's ministry, and testimony, both among the Jews and Gentiles; and it constituted that great "demonstration of the spirit and power," by which both Jews and Gentiles were enabled to believe together on Christ, and were "baptized into the one body; and by it the fountain of the water of life, was opened in Christ's Church; so that all the members, *having been baptized* into Christ, could "drink into the one spirit." By it "the law of the spirit of life in Christ Jesus," was all revealed and confirmed; and by this law of the Spirit they were all baptized, both Jew and Gentile. (Rom. viii, 2.)

There is a view of the baptism mentioned in our text, which is taken by some brethren, for whom I entertain great respect, that I must briefly notice. It is about this: that when the true believer is immersed in water literally, in the name of Christ, his "inner man" is immersed also, in the Holy Spirit, which he then imbibes. These brethren propose to render the Greek particle *en* by the English *in*, rather than *by*. The Greek *en*, more generally means *in*. But it just means *by*, no more, no less, when it relates to the *cause*, *manner*, *means* or *instrument;* and *in*, when the relation is to *place*, *time*, *state*, *condition*, *et cetera*. Here, it is evident to me, the relation is to the Spirit as the *cause* of the baptism, and not to the *element* in which they were baptized. In this treatise of Paul on spiritual gifts, it is nine times rendered "*by*." All will agree, I presume, that *by*, is the proper rendition; as it refers to the Spirit, as *cause*, or *instrument*. It is so rendered, 1 Cor. xii, 3, 8,

9th, 13, and in xiv chapter, sixth verse, all having relation to the revelation, made by the Holy Spirit, unless the 13th be an exception. But *is* it an exception? This is the question. When we go back to the Pentecost baptisms, we find that by the revelations of the Holy Spirit on that occasion, the apostles were authorized to command penitent believers to be baptized in the name of the Lord, and to *promise* the obedient, that they should receive the Holy Spirit, according to the Spirit's promise, by the prophet Joel. So we see that the Jews that believed, "*by* the demonstration of the Spirit and of power," at Jerusalem, were all baptized in water, "into the one body." And thus, also, it was at the opening of the door of faith to the Gentiles, at the house of Cornelius. And by the same kind of spiritual demonstration and power, the Gentiles were rightfully, as believers, in whose behalf the Holy Spirit thus bore witness, baptized in water, into the same, "one body." And thus, by the demonstration and power, and guidance of the Holy Spirit, were all, both Jews and Gentiles, baptized into Christ, and constituted "one body." Of the twain, the Lord, by this demonstration, made "one new man, and so made peace." This whole work of the new creation in Christ, was from the Lord by the revelation and power of the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit was the cause and authority for the apostle's preaching. And that preaching, when it was effectual, "called" both Jews and Gentiles, "out of the world," and then inducted them by baptism into the church. Stating this eliptically, and succinctly, Paul says: "For, by one Spirit," that is, "by the law of the Spirit of life," we are all baptized into one body, whether bond or free! That is, by the power and authority of the revealed law of the one Spirit, the "*one baptism*," was commanded, and obeyed. In a similar style the apostle says, in Heb. x, 8: "Which (burnt offerings) are offered *by* the law." Again, verse 10th: "*By* the which

will, we are sanctified, through the offering of the body of Christ, once for all." Will it do to render the preposition *en* by *in*, in the last quotations? It was *by* the law, and *by* the will, as an authoritative guide that the command to sacrifice was made. In like manner, "*by* the Spirit," is the ordinance of baptism, commanded and obeyed, and the true believer inducted lawfully into the body of Christ. So was Paul *by* the Spirit,—"The law of the Spirit of life by Christ Jesus," baptized and made free. (Rom. vii, 2.) I find, then, these objections to rendering the Greek *en*, by the English *in*, instead of *by* in our text, and to receiving the above views of spiritual baptism, which, induced such translation.

1. It makes *two* baptisms instead of *one*, in the "unity of the Spirit," or,

2. It combines and blends two distinct baptisms, which anciently were entirely distinct and separate, as to time, circumstance and design.

3. It maintains the continuation of the baptism of the Holy Spirit, as *inward* and *invisible*, which was in "the beginning," invariably attended with one outward, miraculous, visible manifestation.

4. It is contrary to the context and scope of the apostle's argument, when the Spirit is referred to, quite frequently, as the *cause*, *agent* or *instrument*.

5. It does not seem to accord with the fact stated in the text, that the members "have all been made to drink into one Spirit." Christians are spoken of as *imbibing* the Holy Spirit in Christ, and not as being *immersed* in it. At first, the Gentile converts were *immersed* in the Holy Spirit *before* their immersion in water; and all admit, that the baptism of the Holy Spirit then was miraculous; why then call the ordinary reception of the Holy Spirit, as the common Christian "*earnest* of heaven," which is re-

ceived now by an established law in the church, without miracle, an *immersion in* the Holy Spirit."*

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*NOTE.—Another argument against the opinion, that we are baptized in the Holy Spirit, at the present day, in any proper sense, I deduce from the metaphorical or figurative use of the words *baptizo* and *baptisma*, in the word of God. That God should call this gift of the Holy Spirit *baptism*, or speak of the promise by saying, "*De baptis thesthe en Pneumati hagio ou meta pollas tautas hemeras*," (You shall be baptized with the Holy Spirit not many days hence), proves to my mind that it was a most extraordinary gift intended, a greater display, or *manifestation*, or "*demonstration of power*" from our Lord on his throne, than any preceding gift, or inspiration of the Spirit, and one of a miraculous character; such as has been seen in influences of the Spirit ever exhibited since the apostolic age. The word has a greater force of meaning, in its metaphorical sense, implying even more than simple inspiration of God; for the old prophets were inspired of God; John, the Baptist, was inspired, and the apostles, and the seventy disciples were inspired also, and could perform miracles, during Christ's personal ministry, in their first preparatory mission to the "lost sheep of the house of Israel." Yet the gift, by the baptism of the Spirit "was not yet given, because Jesus was not yet glorified."

Here, then, was a gift that had a significance that belonged to no previous inspiration of the Spirit, expressed by "*baptism*," which, in its metaphorical meaning, as is fully shown by Dr. Conant in his lecture on "*baptizein*," signifies *whelm*, or *overwhelm*. It completely *overwhelmed* the apostles, and all who received it, and entirely and infallibly controlled and directed their minds in their teaching, and caused to well up and flow from the church, the living waters, from these divinely inspired men and women. It conferred upon them such powers as were never possessed by men of inspiration before. It enabled them to speak in new tongues, in all the languages of earth. They had higher revelations of all the mysteries of redemption. They knew and could testify that "Jesus was Lord of all"—"was the crowned Monarch of the universe;" a fact to which they could only testify, by "speaking by the Spirit of God." The apostles could now speak with authority, as Christ's ambassadors, and could impart spiritual gifts to others by prayer and the imposition of their hands. These unparalleled powers were all conferred by the "baptism of the Holy Spirit." It enabled them to constitute an ever *welling*, flowing fountain of life, from which continually issues, ever since, the river of the waters of life, from the indwelling of the Spirit of

III. We are now prepared to perceive at once what is implied in the third proposition, concerning the *influx*, *indwelling*, and *communion* of the Holy Spirit.

1. In the first place, the Lord filled the apostles with the Holy Spirit when he immersed them *in* it, according to the promise, and made them and all his inspired ministers, in the founding of his church, to be cisterns, according to his promise, which he made at the feast of tabernacles, from which were to "flow rivers of living waters." This he spoke, as you will recollect, "concerning the Spirit which they that believed on him should receive. For the Holy Guest was not yet given, because Jesus was not yet glorified." John vii, 38, 39. On Pentecost, Jesus being now glorified, and "the one body" created, the Spirit or Guest of the body, the Lord breathed into it, at the proper time, and the church was thereby rendered a living, acting, new creation. The Spirit then given, Jesus said, "the world could not receive." But the church did receive it, and the promise was that it should remain with them forever, and from the inspired or spiritual men in the beginning, forced out these rivers of the water of life for the good of all who would receive it. All the members drank of these rivers, and by the apostles, all spiritual gifts necessary in the church, were imparted, "for the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for

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the one body of Christ. It demonstrated and established the union of converted Jews and Gentiles, in one body, as at the house of Cornelius, and was always administered by the Lord, separate and apart from water baptism.

Now, what is the nature of this immersion, in the influence of the gospel in conversion, or in receiving "the Spirit of adoption," when we are baptized into Christ, on our initiation into the church or body? We then truly receive the Spirit of the body, but are we mentally immersed in, or overwhelmed by, the wonderful and inspiring power of the Spirit of God? What say you, brother Lord *et al ?*

the upbuilding and growth of the body, until they all come in the unity of the faith, to the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ." Then the perfect manhood of the church, the new man, being attained, the miraculous gifts ceased, while faith, hope, and love remained. The great aim and end of all being *love*.

2. By the continued *indwelling* of Spirit in the body, all the members thereof, imbibing from these spiritual fountains and rivers, have "the love of God shed abroad in the heart." They are sealed as heirs, and joint heirs with Christ; have the earnest of the Spirit in their hearts, and have access to the one Father, by the one Spirit, and realize experimentally, the righteousness, peace, and joy in the Holy Spirit, that constitute the food and drink of the kingdom. "The Spirit helpeth our infirmities." And we are prepared for the full, actual, happy realization of the "grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Spirit." In this way the church is a living, acting, happy, working body.

3. This communion implies the joint partaking together by all living members, of the Spirit of the Head, the Lord Jesus Christ. This is the unction—the anointing of the members, on account of which they received their name from Christ, the anointed. When, of the twain, one new man was formed, and the church was fully organized, embracing converts from both Jews and Gentiles, united in peace and harmony, in one body, they received their new name, "CHRISTIAN," from their Head, Christ; which new name, means, "*anointed ones*." None are entitled to this holy name, but those who have been inducted into the body, and have imbibed the Spirit of Christ. Such are known by their fruits, to be spiritually minded men and women. They have love, joy, peace, long suffering, gentleness, meekness, goodness, faithfulness, temperance, pa-

tience, and such like graces. They walk by the Spirit, and avoid the works of the flesh. They receive grace sufficient for all duties and trials, and are strengthened with all might by the Spirit in the inner man, in answer to earnest prayer. Such have Christ dwelling in their hearts by faith, and being rooted and grounded in love, have still higher and higher apprehensions of the bountifulness of the love of Christ, till they are filled with all the divine fullness, the spiritual love. "Of the things of which we have spoken, this is the sum:" 1st. That the "*one body*" is the Church of Christ, in its unity, integrity, and progress toward perfection and glory. 2nd. That "by the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus," we are all, as volunteers, baptized into this spiritual body, or, are truly and lawfully initiated into the church, or spiritual reign of Christ, and made partakers of Jesus and his great redemption, and are adopted heirs, according to the hope of eternal life, and 3rd, All in Christ imbibe the Holy Spirit, as our intercessor and comforter, and our earnest of heaven, by which the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts, and we enjoy happy communion with the Father, the Redeemer, and the Holy Spirit, and have fellowship with one another, to the fullest and happiest extent. And this enjoyment, not now by "the *baptism* of the Holy Spirit," or Guest, but, by a regularly established law of the new life in Christ; not by a miraculous *immersion*, or supernatural *overwhelming* of the Spirit, but by the Holy Spirit's ordinary influences, as the life-giving soul or spirit of the "one new man" in Christ Jesus. We receive Christ's Spirit, when we obey the gospel, and become members of his body. Then we are made to drink into the one Spirit.

Beloved readers, would you enjoy the Holy Spirit to the fullest extent possible in this life, heed the exhortation, "Repent and be baptized every one of you, in the name of Jesus Christ our Lord, for the remission of sins, and

you shall receive the promise of the Holy Spirit. And if you have received the promise, in Christ, be faithful, and prayerful, and careful, that you "grieve not the Holy Spirit of God, whereby ye are sealed unto the day of redemption." (Eph. iv, 30).

The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you all. Amen.

SERMON XX

REDEMPTION.

BY B. K. SMITH.

"For verily he took not on *him the nature of* angels, but he took on *him* the seed of Abraham.—HEB. II, 16, common version.

WE have selected this passage of Holy Writ as the foundation for our present discourse. The superficial reader of the New Testament will doubtless be at a loss to see the connection between this text and the subject of *redemption*—the announced theme of the present occasion. It is for this very reason we have chosen this text, that the common people—those for whose special benefit this volume is being prepared—may be able to understand—what *all students* of the Holy Scriptures know to be—the true import and meaning of this very important passage.

We have given the text as it stands in the king's translation, italics and all, that the reader may judge for himself of the correctness of what we have to say. It is, or *should be*, known to every Sunday school scholar, that the words printed in italic letters, in the common version of the Bible, are so printed to designate them as *added words*, or words having no equivalents in the original Greek or Hebrew text; added, as the translators supposed, to complete the sense, or reduce the subject matter to the English idiom. Now, these "added words," as they lay no claim to inspiration, are but the *opinions* of uninspired men as to the *constructive* import of the text, it is the privilege and *duty* of every reader to receive them with caution. We

should exercise a sound discretion in adopting such *constructive* renderings; first see how the passage would read without the *added words*, and if it will make sense, in harmony with the context, without the interpolation, as a general rule, it should be disregarded in construing the passage.

By this rule let us try the passage before us. We will read it without the added words: "For verily he took not on . . . . . angels, but he took on . . . . . the seed of Abraham." Now, confining ourselves to this rendering, let us see if a much shorter interpolation will not make the passage intelligible, and give it a sense more in harmony with the whole scope of the context: "For verily he took not *hold* on angels; but he took *hold* on the seed of Abraham." Here is but one *added word*—if, indeed, *it* be an added word—inserted in each member of the compound sentence, and it gives quite a different meaning to the passage. Instead of simply repeating what is stated in the preceding context (verse 14), it is, as it purports to be, a cogent reason *why* he became partaker of flesh and blood—that is, of humanity, viz.: He did not *take hold* of angels (had he done so, he would have assumed their nature); but he *took hold* of the seed of Abraham. "Wherefore," as stated in the next verse, "it behooved him, in all things, to be made like unto his brethren, that he might be a merciful and faithful high priest in all things pertaining to God, to make reconciliation for the sins of the people." Thus the *object* of his *taking hold* of our race, instead of angels, is clearly stated: to destroy our adversary, and deliver us not only from death, but from the fear of it; and then, as our high priest, to make reconciliation for our sins.

But it will be seen, by a critical examination of the passage, that the one word (*hold*) in the above reading is *not* an "added word," but clearly indicated in the original

text, and *necessary* to a literal rendering of it in the English language. The mere English reader may satisfy himself of this fact by examining the marginal reading, even in the common version, which purports to be—and is—a literal rendering. The following is the Greek text as given by Dr. Clarke in his commentary on the passage. We give it in italic letters, for the benefit of those unacquainted with the Greek alphabet.

"*Ou gar depon angelon epilambanetai, alla spermatos Abraam epilambanetai.*"

"*Moreover, he doth not at all take hold of angels; but of the seed of Abraham he taketh hold.*"

"This," says he, "is the marginal reading, and is greatly to be preferred to that in the text. Jesus Christ, intending not to redeem angels, but to redeem man, did not assume the angelic nature, but was made man, coming directly by the seed or *posterity of Abraham*, with whom the *original covenant* was made, that *in his seed all the nations of the earth should be blessed;* and it is on this account that the apostle mentions the *seed of Abraham*, and not *the seed of Adam;* and it is strange that so many commentators should have missed so obvious a sense. The word itself signifies not only to *take hold of*, but to *help, succor, save from sinking*," etc.

To this agrees substantially every commentator of any note known to me; and even the "old writers," alluded to by Clarke, represent the rebel angels as *falling downe, alle downe*, into hopeless perdition; while man, falling in the same direction, was *seized* or *laid hold of* by the Lord, and prevented from falling *alle downe*, or into endless perdition. Without stopping now to criticize this last thought, so quaintly expressed by the theologians of by-gone days, we announce the conclusion to which the foregoing testimony brings us, viz.: that our text—properly construed—

affirms that our Lord *did not assume the redemption of the fallen angels, but did assume that of fallen man.*

This clearly implies the existence of fallen angels, if there were no other allusions to such a class of beings in all the Bible. But the apostles—Peter and Jude—make unmistakable reference to them, 1 Pet. ii, 4; Jude 6; which the reader will please turn to and read in their respective contextual connections. Our Lord also evidently refers to this class of fallen beings in his description of the judgment scene. Matt. xxv, 41. This is deemed sufficient on this point. Indeed, I almost blush to think that even this much in the way of grave argument and proof should be necessary in a Bible-reading and Bible-believing country, upon a point so obviously patent upon the whole face of the divine volume. But we have some persons professing to believe the Bible, who affect downright skepticism as to the existence of what they call a *personal devil*, or any other fallen spirits of angelic origin. This is my apology for what has been said on this point.

We come now to consider a question that obtrudes itself upon the mind, in view of the foregoing premises:—As angels are greater in power and might than men, according to Peter; and man was made a little lower than the angels, according to David, why should the superior race be passed by, and the inferior race redeemed? Why this discrimination in favor of a comparatively inferior race? This question, though at the first blush seemingly unanswerable, will be found not so hard of solution, upon a more minute examination of the subject. Let us consider a few of the reasons which scripture and the nature of the case reveal for this seeming enigma.

1. Man, though "made a little lower than the angels," has, nevertheless, a higher destiny to accomplish than they; being, or having been, "made to have dominion over the works of God's hands."

This original purpose of Jehovah in the creation of man, is intimated, first, in the Mosaic account of his creation. Gen. i, 26. It is indicated a little more plainly by David in the 8th Psalm; it is also evidently alluded to by the Lord, Matt. xxv, 34; but it is unmistakably taught in the foregoing part of this second chapter of Hebrews. Let us read, commencing at the fifth verse: "For unto the angels hath he not put in subjection the world to come whereof we speak. But one in a certain place [Ps. viii] testified, saying, What is man, that thou art mindful of him? or the son of man, that thou visitest him? Thou madest him a little lower than the angels; thou crownedst him with glory and honor, and didst set him over the works of thy hands; thou hast put all things in subjection under his feet. For in that he put all in subjection under him, he left nothing that is not put under him. But now we see not yet all things put under him; but we see Jesus, who was made [just as man was] a little lower than the angels, for the suffering of death, crowned with glory and honor; that he, by the grace of God, should taste death for every man."

This quotation and application of the language of David by the inspired apostle, leaves no doubt as to its meaning. We learn from the whole premises, first, that angels have no ulterior destiny to accomplish—no dominion in the future world—"the world to come"—to attain to; while, in the second place, unto man he *has* "put in subjection the world to come;" involving dominion over the entire creation of God. "For in that he put all in subjection under him, he left nothing that is not put under him." Sun, moon and stars; angels, principalities, and powers; thrones, mights, and dominions; these, all and singular, are but appurtenances of the inheritance which God has prepared for his son and heir—man.

Angels are ranked as *servants*, and have no promise of

ever being promoted to a higher position in the scale of being; but man, though originally made lower, has the undoubted assurance, that if true to himself, he may attain the relation of a son—by adoption according to Paul, or by being born again, according to John—and as such, become an heir of God, and joint heir with Jesus Christ. Whatever he inherits, they inherit; whatever he is, they will be; "for we shall be like him."

2. Whatever ulterior purposes or destiny Jehovah may have prepared for angels in the "world to come," there are still enough left who were not involved in the rebellion which ruined Satan and his adherents, in whom to accomplish such purpose, or fulfill such destiny. But with man, the whole race was involved in the consequences of the fall; being bound up in the person of our first parents. The physical results of the Adamic transgression could not but be transmitted to his posterity, and those results involved a physical impossibility, over which no part of the race could ever rise to the accomplishment of the purposes or fulfillment of the destiny, for which the race was created. Looking at the matter as we would at a mere human enterprise, we may imagine the Creator weighing and deliberating upon the three alternatives which the fall (in that stage of the process) involved: First, will he abandon his original purpose in creating man—to complete him in his own image and likeness, and give him dominion over the works of his hands? or, second, will he make a second race, with the liability of its running a similar career, and falling into the same calamity? or, third, will he redeem the race already created, and yet fulfill his original purpose in it? This last alternative appears to have been adopted; and hence the scheme of human redemption.

3. But there is a third reason, more potent than either of the foregoing, why the fallen angels were passed by, and fallen man laid hold of for the purpose of redemption.

The redemption of the fallen angels was impossible, while that of man was not.

This proposition may seem presumptuous to some—even bordering on blasphemy; but I beg such to remember that the scriptures assure us that "*It is impossible for God to lie;*" that "*He can not deny himself,*" etc., etc.

Now, if it be found that the redemption of the fallen angels would involve a violation of the truth of God—a denying of himself—it will be admitted at once, I presume, that the thing is impossible. Let us reason upon this matter a little, and see if it is indeed so:

Every department of creation is under law to the Creator—each under a law specially adapted to its nature and capacity. Mere inert, dead matter, is wholly under the laws of magnetic attraction, and that of gravitation. The former of these, though known to exist, and sufficiently understood to be practically applied to the purposes of navigation, surveying, etc., is yet an inscrutable mystery, as regards the philosophical *how* or *why* of its existence and power. The latter, from its universal familiarity, is known, even by the masses, to be only amenable to the screw, the lever, and the wedge; and yet, the *why* and *wherefore* were subjects of grave thought to the discoverer of its existence—Sir Isaac Newton.

Time and space would fail us, to speak in detail, of all the various forms of life, vegetable and animal, with the specific laws and instincts by which each is governed. Sufficient for our present purpose, is it, to call attention to the perfect adaptedness of each law, or instinct, to the *subject* it is designed to govern. From this point we readily conclude, that higher orders of things would be furnished by the Creator, with laws and instincts, as well adapted to their nature and wants, as those by which the climbing vine is guided, in putting forth its tendrils, just where they are able to reach, and wind themselves

around something strong enough to support it, till, by reaching out another finger still higher up, it lays hold of this additional support, and so, climbs on.

Accordingly, we find man—an intellectual and moral being, as well as animal—not only under laws and instincts governing his animal life, but also the subject of laws adapted to his moral and intellectual nature. Hygiene, or the laws of physical health, govern the former; and human legislation, and the Bible, govern the latter. Each statute has an appropriate penalty, for its violation—either in the physical or moral code—ranging from the mildest reproof for the mere peccadillo, to the stern infliction of the final penalty for capital crime. In the execution of human law, by human magistrates and executioners, errors often occur; the guilty go unpunished, and the innocent sometimes suffer unjustly; still the principle above stated, is recognized in every civilized government on the face of the earth; and all statesmen now agree that the *certainty* of the laws being executed, is a better guarantee of their respectful observance by the citizen, or subject, than the severity of the penalties enacted.

Now, no such errors obtained in the execution of the divine laws. His disciplinary reproofs, and chastisements, are always well and wisely administered—the guilty *never* escape, and the innocent *never* suffer unjustly; and when the ulterior capital penalty is incurred, no power in the universe can save the culprit from it. Even infinite mercy can not save him; for infinite TRUTH demands his punishment.

Now for an application of these principles and reasonings to the case in hand: Angels are creatures of God, and as such, are under law to him. They are intelligent, moral agents, and as such, under moral suasion and not physical force. Whatever may be the details of the laws under which they stand, it is manifest that they hold their position

as *approved* servants of God, by the tenure of obedience to those laws. And those laws, to be of any account whatever, *must have penalties;* and among those penalties, there must be one adapted to *capital crime.*

Now, what kind of *capital penalty* could *Infinite Mercy* itself enact, for a race of beings incapable of suffering death? In the very nature of the case, it must be eternal in its duration. Anything short of this, would not be *capital punishment,* or a final disposing of an incorrigible offender.

Now, as those fallen angels doubtless understood both the law and the penalty, before they transgressed it—knew that they must inevitably suffer the penalty they were incurring, unless they could succeed in dethroning the Divine Sovereign; they have only got what they fairly contracted for, with their eyes open, so to speak. And if it were possible for Jehovah to relent, now that some have incurred the penalty, and modify the nature, or abridge the duration of the punishment, what assurance would the intelligent universe have that he would not violate his word on any, or every other point? Even his *promises* could not be relied on. As it is, this example is significantly pointed to by the apostles as one among many evidences the Lord has furnished of his inflexible faithfulness in fulfilling both threats and promises.

Thus we think our position—*that the redemption of the fallen angels was impossible*—is established beyond a cavil or doubt. But some one, perhaps, is ready to ask: Will not the same, or similar objections, lie against the scheme of human redemption? I answer, by no means. It will be recollected that man was made *a little lower than the angels*—enough lower to be capable of suffering death. He was, therefore, placed under a law which had death affixed as its capital penalty. "In the day thou eatest thereof dying thou shalt die."—*Marginal reading.*

I give the marginal reading here because, as Dr. Clarke says of the marginal reading of our text, "It is greatly to be preferred." It gives the literal and, therefore, the true reading of the original text. It does not affirm that death should actually be consummated on the very day of the transgression, but only begin: *Dying, thou shalt* (eventually) *die.* That this is the true meaning of Genesis ii, 17, is evident not only from the fact that he actually lived nine hundred and thirty years after the transgression, but from what Jehovah says to him, Gen. iii, 19, when pronouncing sentence on him after he had sinned: "In the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat bread, till thou return unto the ground; for out of it wast thou taken; for dust thou art, and unto dust shalt thou return."

Now, in this whole transaction, as recorded by the pen of inspiration, we see no hint or intimation of that *threefold death* of which the old school theologians speak so much. Indeed, according to that, they have the *truth* of God as fully compromised as it would be by a scheme for the redemption of the fallen angels. If the threat in Genesis ii, 17, actually involved death, temporal, spiritual, and eternal—all to be incurred on the very day of the transgression; and then, after Adam had actually sinned, the Lord relented, took the matter under advisement, and finally changed the programme—granting a respite of nearly a thousand years, as to his natural life; inflicting total, hereditary depravity upon him and his posterity throughout all coming generations; but upon the whole, laying the blame of the whole transaction upon his Son, and requiring him to pay the whole score, satisfying the utmost demand of law and justice, and yet leaving the greater part of the race in that helpless and hopeless spiritual death—brought upon them, not by their own act, and already fully atoned for by the Messiah—without the slightest possibility of ever enjoying spiritual life or being

saved!—I say, if this bundle of contradictions and absurdity, or any thing like it, were true, the scheme of human redemption would indeed be a hopeless impossibility. But I thank God that such crudities have no higher authority than the befogged theorizing of a comparatively dark age.

No, sirs; the truth of God is as fully vindicated in the execution of the violated law on fallen man, as on the fallen angels; but in the case of man, after the full execution of the sentence—death, or rather mortality—which passed upon the whole race—there was room still behind it all for Mercy to get in and redeem! O, the depth both of the goodness and mercy of God! Man has fallen! has sinned and come short of the glory of God. The grave closes over him, burying beneath its cold, dark shade all hope of his ever attaining to the glory for which he was created, or realising the "kingdom prepared for him from the foundation of the world." This sad event involves the trilemma already suggested in a previous part of this discourse, viz.: an abandonment of the original purpose in creation; the creation of a new race out of the same or similar materials, liable to run the same round and fall in like manner; or the redemption of the race already created. Mercy says, REDEEM! and Truth, being fully vindicated by the sentence pronounced, Gen. iii, 19, and really requiring something to be done, that the avowed purpose in man's creation may be accomplished, unites in the decision. And thus, "Mercy and Truth are met together; Righteousness and Peace have kissed each other." Ps. lxxxv, 10.

To make the difference between angels and men more palpable, let us place the cases side by side, and look at them again.

As the sanction of the law under which angels are placed, we find a penalty called *everlasting fire*. From

this there can be no redemption without repealing the law, or in some way impinging the truth of the Lawgiver. As the sanction of the law under which man was placed in Eden, we find *death* and the *grave*. From this both Mercy and Truth unite in pleading for redemption.

Having given three satisfactory reasons (as we think) for the redemption of man, and the abandonment of fallen angels to their fate, we proceed now to examine the nature and effect of the redemption thus wrought out for man. The verb to *redeem*, as defined by Webster, among nearly a dozen different shades of meaning, has the following: "3. To rescue, to recover, to deliver from." Now, this is plainly the sense in which it is applicable to our subject so far as we have as yet considered it. It is plainly not the *buying* off of the captive, by negotiation *with*, and the payment of a ransom price *to*, the captor; neither is it the *repurchase* of the forfeited Edenic estate, and a restoration of the rescued prisoner to his former condition. This, as has been already shown, would compromit the *truth* of God, and is, therefore, impossible. But it is clearly a case of *rescue by conquest of the captor;* and instead of restoring the rescued captive to his former estate, it passes him on to a state of being in which "Death shall have no more dominion over him." "I will ransom them from the power of the grave; I will redeem them from death. O Death! I'll be thy plague; O Grave! I'll be thy destruction." Hos. xiii, 34.

Thus an advance is made, even by the fall and the redemption consequent upon it, in the direction of the accomplishment of the original purpose—the completion of man in the image of God, possessed of an imperishable existence, and wielding a scepter of dominion over the work of God's hands. Had he not fallen, he doubtless would have attained eventually an imperishable existence; for this is indispensable to the enjoyment of an everlasting

kingdom; for what good would an everlasting kingdom do, if the proprietor had only a limited life to enjoy it in? The resurrection accomplishes that object; for our Saviour says of men in the resurrection state, that they are equal to the angels in two respects; that is, they *marry* not, neither do they *die* any more.

Thus far, our subject applies to man as a unit—unconditionally and universally. All who fell in Adam, are, in the sense of our subject thus far, redeemed by Christ. As the physical results of the fall were alike to all the race, even so the physical results of the redemption are alike to all. But if the scheme of human redemption contemplated only the physical condition of the race, and made provision for nothing else, the benevolence of the scheme would be exceedingly doubtful. From the fact that Adam *sinned*, and disqualified himself to enjoy the presence of God, it follows that his posterity would be likely to follow his example. And as it is affirmed by inspiration, that "without holiness no man can see the Lord," or enjoy his presence; the introduction of persons into a state of being eternal in its duration, without the necessary moral and spiritual qualifications to enjoy the presence of God, or to exercise the functions of divine royalty for which the race was created, would only be to fit them for herding with those fallen angels in hopeless perdition.

Furthermore: if the moral and spiritual redemption of mankind was to be effected, as the Augustinian theory teaches, by the resistless grace, and sovereign power of God, in pursuance of an eternal decree, without any foresight of faith or obedience—without the consent and cooperation of the creature, but in spite of his most determined resistance;—I say, if this theory were true in its application to the salvation, either of part, or all the race, the greatest misfortune that has ever befallen the race,

since the fall, was the public manifestation of Jesus Christ, and the preaching of the gospel among mankind.

It is a notorious fact, that the preaching of the gospel has, as our Lord forewarned us it would, set, even the members of the same household at variance with each other, broken up the quiet, not only of families and neighborhoods, but even plunged nations into the most bloody and cruel wars. Now, if the consent and co-operation of the creature has nothing to do with securing his salvation, or deciding his eternal destiny, it would have been better, a thousand times, that the scheme had been planned, and executed, without disturbing the harmony of human society by the knowledge of the fact. Let the divine scheme work out its own inevitable results, without disturbing the equanimity of the human mind.

But no: man, though fallen, is still a moral agent; and as such, endowed with sufficient intelligence, and moral and spiritual perception, to hear, digest, and decide upon questions affecting his moral and spiritual interests. It was, therefore, made a prominent feature of the scheme, that it should not only obviate the physical consequences of the fall, but provide for the personal sins of the individual members of the race—redeeming them from their own iniquities, and purifying them to God, a peculiar people, zealous of good works. The former of these objects—the physical redemption from death—is as universal and unconditional as the physical results of the fall; and will be as effectually accomplished upon those who never heard of the name of *Jesus*, as death has passed upon all—even those who never heard of the name of *Adam*. Not so with the latter object—the moral, religious, and spiritual qualification of the individuals of the race for the "kingdom prepared for them from the foundation of the world."

In the very nature of the case, *this* must be conditional. No person can be an actual sinner until he transgresses

actual law; "for sin is the transgression of law," and no person can be redeemed from his sins, or iniquities, without his own knowledge and consent. He must give his own free consent to accept of pardon for his past sins, and be purified from them through the blood of Christ; and then maintain that purity by a life of habitual obedience to the divine law.

The blood of Christ has no redeeming, or atoning efficacy, for the sins of any one, who, through ignorance or perversity, neglects the appointed means of its application, or refuses to be *reclaimed from the practice of sin.* Christ, "who gave himself for us, that he might redeem us *from* (not in) all iniquity, and purify unto himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works," has never proposed to stand between the *habitual sinner*—whether in or out of his kingdom—and divine justice, either to ward off its blows, or receive them on his own person. Neither has he proposed to apply his own personal obedience to the credit of the sinner's account, and thereby declare him righteous without actual obedience on his part. "Little children, let no man deceive you: he that doeth righteousness is righteous, even as he is righteous; and he that committeth sin, is of the devil; for the devil sinneth from the beginning. For this purpose was the Son of God manifested, that he might *destroy* (not cover up and excuse) the works of the devil." 1 Jno. iii, 7, 8.

This part of the work, then—the *regeneration, sanctification,* and *education* of the moral, religious, and spiritual faculties of man, requires a messenger, mediator, or minister plenipotentiary, *sent to man,* rather than a champion sent against another party *for* him. Christ, therefore, makes his first appearance in the unassuming guise of a minister, or messenger of God, charged with a message of reconciliation from God to the revolted race of man. In the execution of this mission, though the world, as such,

knew him not, and his own nation, the Jews, as such, received him not, yet a few did recognize and receive him—believing on his name. And to these he gave power (or privilege) to become sons of God.

Now, the message he bore—called the covenant of reconciliation—required to be signed by the parties contracting, and sealed with the government seal, in order to its efficacy in securing to the reconciled rebels, the amnesty for the past, and the protection and support for the future, which it proposed. Even those already reconciled could not realize the benefits of the proposed relation and heirship; (for it proposes to all who subscribe it, not only amnesty for the past, and protection and support for the future, but to "call them sons of God," and, as such, heirs of God and joint heirs with Jesus Christ); I say, these benefits could not be secured, even to the few who received him, without the completion of the covenant. And as these signatures must be written in blood, and the government seal attested by the same, it became necessary that the victim should be slain.

But as the offices of Mediator and Victim were both vested in the same person, it becomes necessary to commit the further promulgation of the message of reconciliation to other hands. And who so proper to commit this work to, as those already reconciled by it? Thus, as Paul says, 2 Cor. v, 18, "All things are of God, who hath reconciled us unto himself by Jesus Christ; and hath given to us the ministry of reconciliation." Hence the commission, "Go into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature," is but the carrying out of the great mission of Messiah to the race of mankind.

Meanwhile, the "appointed victim" is betrayed into the hands of wicked men, and by them crucified and slain. In the shedding of his blood, a twofold object is accomplished: First, the covenant of pardon and reconciliation

to God, is perfected and made valid by it; and second, he is thereby ushered into the field of his great conflict and triumph *for* man. He is now—strange as it may seem—from the unresisting, bleeding, dying Lamb of Calvary, metamorphosed into the Lion of the tribe of Judah! and in the majesty and strength of his present character, of champion and deliverer of man from the power of the grave, he grapples with the grim king of terrors in his own dark domain; wrenches from his girdle the keys of death and of hades; then brandishing them aloft, with a voice which penetrates the deepest recesses of hades, as well as the highest dome of the heavens, he proclaims: "I am he that liveth and was dead; and behold! I am alive forevermore, amen; and have the keys of hades and of death."

Thus the conqueror resumes his life; and thereby gives assurance of his determination to deliver all the posterity of Adam "from the bondage of corruption, into the glorious liberty of the sons of God." O! that all would avail themselves of the advantages of this glorious deliverance; receive the *abundance of grace, and the gift of righteousness;* and thus be qualified to *reign in life by Jesus Christ.*

But to return. Our Redeemer, having passed through three phases of his great and multiform mission, is now about to assume a fourth. As the covenant of reconciliation is now sealed with blood, and some of the children of men have already accepted and subscribed it, and arrangements are made for pushing the work of reconciliation to the uttermost parts of the earth, it becomes necessary that the children of God on earth, shall have a representative, advocate, or high priest in the court of heaven. And who so proper to represent us in the presence of our heavenly Father, as he who represented God to us? In *his mission* to us, he was God's representative, charged

with powers plenipotentiary, to propose and settle the conditions of reconciliation to God. In his return to his Father's throne, he is our representative, or high priest; charged with our offerings—I mean the offerings of those who, by becoming children of God, have acquired interests and have tokens and offerings to send up, that the worldling neither has, nor can conceive of.

There is still another object of his return to the Divine Presence, shadowed forth in the typical economy by the consecration of Aaron, and his carrying a portion of the "blood of the (old) covenant" into the inner sanctuary and sprinkling the mercy seat. Of this, if the inspired Paul "could not speak particularly," it illy becomes us to theorize. Suffice it, that he, as the anti-type of Aaron, "has entered into the true tabernacle, which the Lord pitched, and not man." Not without blood—and that his own—besprinkling the true mercy seat; and thus, in some sense, "accomplishing the services of God;" consummating a complete reconciliation between God and his earthly children; "having obtained eternal redemption for us."

But our prescribed limits are exhausted. May the Lord enable us all fully to avail ourselves of the benefits of the scheme of redemption. May we comprehend—at least so far as our conduct is concerned—the "fellowship of the mystery," and so act that we may realize the fullness of the blessing of the gospel of Christ, even that which, as yet, we can not fully comprehend. To our King be glory and honor now and ever. Amen.

SERMON XXI.

THE SECOND GREAT COMMISSION.

BY R. MILLIGAN.

"The Spirit and the bride say, Come. And let him that heareth say, Come. And let him that is athirst, come: and whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely."—REV. 22: 17.

My dear Brethren and Sisters of the Kentucky Christian Missionary Society:—I respectfully invite your attention this morning to a few thoughts on the Second Great Commission of our blessed Lord and Redeemer, as it is found recorded in the 17th verse of the xxii chapter of the Apocalypse.—"Let him that heareth, say, Come."

That was a glorious development of the divine philanthropy, that was made in the First Great Commission that was ever given to preach the Gospel to the nations: I mean that commission in which Christ first said to his apostles: "Go ye into all the world, and preach the Gospel to every creature." Mark xvi, 15. Such a conception of the grace of God had never before entered into the mind of any man, whether of the Jews or the Gentiles. They had all become vain by their own speculations. They had all limited and circumscribed the divine philanthropy, by their own little, narrow, contracted, and contemptible schemes of religious philosophy.

True, indeed, the Jews were greatly in advance of the Gentiles, with respect to their knowledge of divine things. They had the living oracles of the Old Testament, in which the Gospel was both typically and prophetically revealed

and illustrated. David and Isaiah had often spoken in the most eloquent terms of the humiliation, the sufferings, the exaltation, and the glorious, triumphant, and universal reign of the Messiah. So, too, had Daniel, and Ezekiel, and Jeremiah, and other prophets.

But the Jews were never able to rise to a just, clear and full conception of the spiritual import of these prophecies. They never once imagined, that God so loved the *world*, that he had in purpose given his only begotten Son, in order that whosoever would believe in him, might not perish, but have everlasting life. They never supposed that the Gentiles were to be made fellow-citizens with themselves in the kingdom of heaven; and that the Messiah was about to unite in one glorious brotherhood, all the tribes and families of this sin-stained earth. Nay, verily, their minds were carnalized, and secularized. They looked upon the coming Messiah simply as the great apostle and advocate of Judaism;—as a mighty politico-ecclesiastical prince, who was about to emancipate the Twelve Tribes according to the flesh; and extend their dominion from Jerusalem to the ends of the world.

Such were the prejudices of the people; such were the prejudices of their rules; and such were, to some extent, and for a limited time, the prejudices of even the twelve apostles, to whom was committed the word of reconciliation. With them, "*all the world*," in the style and phraseology of the commission, meant all the Jewish world; and "*every creature*" meant every Israelite, according to the flesh. And hence neither in Palestine nor beyond it, was salvation offered to any Gentile, for several years after the coronation of the Messiah. They that were scattered abroad, went everywhere, preaching the word to Jews only. Acts xi, 19.

But the vision of Peter completely removed this prejudice from his mind. He was taught by the lesson of the

symbolic sheet and its contents, to call no man common or unclean. He then, for the first time in his life, discovered the heart-stirring and soul-inspiring truth, "that God is no respecter of persons; but that in every nation, he that feareth God and worketh righteousness is accepted of him." Acts x, 34, 35. He then understood that Jesus Christ had, by the grace of God, tasted death for every man; and that he had become the author of eternal salvation to all them that obey him, whether they be Jews or Gentiles.

This was enough for Peter and the rest of the apostles. They no longer conferred with flesh and blood. But with a degree of moral heroism, and devotion, and self-sacrifice, that has no parallel in all the records of earth and time, they went from city to city, and from country to country, proclaiming the good news and glad tidings to every kindred, and tongue, and people, and nation. Their only apology to their calumniators and revilers was the love of Christ. "We thus reason," said they, "that if one died for all, then were all dead; and that he died for all, that they who live through his death, should not henceforth live unto themselves, but unto him who died for them, and rose again." 2 Cor. v, 14, 15. Hence their zeal; hence their energy; hence their devotion; and hence their success.

But it was never God's purpose that this work should be done wholly and exclusively by the apostles. Nay, verily. As Christianity was provided for all; *so also it was designed to enlist and to draw out the energies of all:—to make every disciple of Christ an instrument of good to the church, and to the world.*

This element of the Christian system and of Christian success was well understood by the apostles: and while they lived, it was pretty generally regarded in all the churches. They labored every where and in every possi-

ble way to give to it that prominence in the practical workings of the system, that its great and paramount importance so justly demands. They appointed evangelists to set in order the things that were wanting, and to ordain elders and deacons in every church. And to these again was committed, in a very special manner, the moral and religious education of the churches. While exercising a general supervision over all the interests of their respective congregations, *it was made the duty of the elders especially, to call into active service all the talents, and energies, and resources of said congregations: to see that all the members of the body of Christ, like the members of the human body, were performing their proper and appropriate functions, and that every joint, and every band, and every fiber, might contribute in some way, and in some measure, to the health, and energy, and efficiency of the whole body.* Ephesians iv, 11, 16. This was the evangelical order of things; this was the apostolic order; and this was also the divine order, which by the grace of God, was established in all the primitive churches, and which was also recorded for our admonition and instruction.

To the disciple, then, who really and earnestly desires to understand his duty, and to do it, this primitive practice would seem to be an all-sufficient guide in such matters. If, under the administration of the apostles, the primitive Christians *all* labored for the spread and the success of the Gospel, then, surely, we also should all labor together for the same glorious ends and purposes. If to save mankind from their sins, was the daily and chief concern of the primitive converts to Christianity, then, most assuredly, it should also be our meat and our drink, to cooperate in every way that we can to save our poor dying race from the piercings of that worm that shall never die, and from the torments of that fire that shall never be

quenched. This, it seems to me, is a most reasonable and legitimate conclusion from all the premises.

But in order to place this matter beyond all doubt; and in order to set forever at nought, by a single divine oracle, all anti-missionary theories and hypotheses; and, no doubt, also for the purpose of giving to this practical element of the Gospel economy that great prominence and eminence which its paramount importance so very justly demands—for these, and perhaps for other similar purposes, our blessed Saviour appeared in his own person, to the beloved John, on the isle of Patmos; and just as he was about to close forever the canon of Divine Revelation, he gave to the church this Second Great Commission: "Let him that heareth, say, Come." The first commission was given to the apostles directly; and through them it was given to the church indirectly. But this Second Commission was given, merely through John's instrumentality, to the church directly. Nay, more: it was given *to every member of the church.* "Let him that heareth, say, Come," is the gracious commission of our blessed Lord, *to every one of his true and faithful disciples.*

But what, it may be asked, is the meaning of this Second Great Commission? What does it imply? and what does it require? Does it require that every disciple shall become a missionary of the cross, and that, like the apostles, he shall go into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature? or does it even require that he shall, in his own proper person, become a teacher or preacher of the gospel in any sense, or in any capacity whatever? Certainly not. For all such labors he may be disqualified. And we all know that God does not require impossibilities of any man.

But these words of our blessed and adorable Redeemer do evidently imply and require:

In the first place, that every man who has the necessary

qualifications, should, as far as possible, devote his whole life to the ministry of Christianity. This is a call—a divine call—to every disciple who has the necessary talents and acquirements, to consecrate himself wholly and entirely to the proclamation of the Word—to the public preaching and teaching of the everlasting gospel among the nations. He is hereby required to say to all men, so far as he may have the opportunity to do so, Come to the Saviour; come to the Lamb of God that taketh away the sin of the world; take his yoke upon you and learn of him, and you shall find rest to your souls.

And hence, you see that there is here made the most ample provision for filling up and supplying the ranks of the Christian ministry. If all who are thus divinely called, would only be obedient to the voice of Providence, and to the laws of the kingdom, what a mighty host of devoted and energetic missionaries would even now be holding forth the words of life to the dying millions of our race! how soon would their reports go out through all the earth, and their words to the very ends of the world.

But, alas, how many have just here mistaken their true and proper calling! How many are now engaged in the practice of law, and medicine, and other secular pursuits, who, like a Johnson, should be rousing to a sense of their personal responsibilities, the vast multitudes of our own slumbering population; or who, like a Judson or a Carey, should be holding forth the light of life to the many millions who, in foreign lands, are now sitting in the region and shadow of death.

Brethren, what do you think of such a course? And what do you think of the responsibility and destiny of those who pertinaciously persevere in it? If Paul could truthfully say, "Woe is to me if I preach not the gospel," then, indeed, what must be the doom of the many, who still continue to neglect the great obligations that God has

imposed upon them to proclaim to poor, dying sinners the same glorious message of his grace? Will it not be more tolerable for many of the benighted heathen, in the day of judgment, than for these? Take care, then, my brother, how you trifle with the calls of God's providence. Remember that you are not your own; you are bought with a price. Therefore, glorify God in your body and in your spirit, which are God's. 1 Cor. vi, 20.

But, secondly, it is evidently implied in these words of our blessed Lord and Redeemer, that every disciple of his, however destitute he may be of intellectual and literary qualifications, should communicate the word of truth to others, *privately* and *socially*. He is hereby authorized and required to say, in all his social intercourse with his own family, and friends, and neighbors, and fellow-citizens, Come to the Saviour. Come to Mount Sion, and to the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem; and to an innumerable company of angels; and the general assembly and church of the first-born, who are enrolled in heaven; and to God, the Judge of all; and to the spirits of just men made perfect; and to Jesus, the Mediator of the New Covenant; and to the blood of sprinkling, which speaketh better things than the blood of Abel. Heb. xii, 22–24.

This was the primitive order of things; and this is their natural order. And hence, they that were scattered abroad from Jerusalem, by reason of the first persecution, went every where preaching the Word. Acts viii, 4. There was no attempt made to compromise with the false etiquette of the world in this matter—no stopping to consider how men of wealth, and learning, and fashion would regard the simple story of the Cross. Not at all. Out of the abundance of their hearts, they simply and joyfully communicated to others the good news and glad tidings of life and salvation through a once crucified, but now risen and glorified Saviour. And just so it will ever be. So

long as it is written, "Out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh" (Matt. xii, 34), so long will every *consistent* disciple of the Lord Jesus make the simple story of the Cross the main burden and topic of his conversation in all his intercourse with his fellow men. To all such it must ever be a source of unspeakable satisfaction to be able to say to the destitute everywhere, Come and take of the bread and the water of life freely. Isa. lv, 1, and Rev. xxii, 17.

And, thirdly, this is a commission to all the followers of the Lord Jesus Christ, to preach to the people, not only in *word*, but also in *deed;* not only by precept, but also by example. It is a commission to let our light so shine before men, that others, seeing our *good works*, may thereby be constrained to glorify our Father who is in heaven. And especially is it a commission to us all, and a most solemn requisition upon us all, *to contribute liberally of our means for the support and comfort of those who are able and willing to go forth into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature.* In this way we can all say indirectly to the benighted and disobedient of all nations, Come to the Lamb of God that taketh away the sin of the world.

It is an old Latin maxim, sustained by the authority of our best legal writers, and even by that of the Holy Spirit, that "What a man does by an agent, he does by himself." And hence you see, that by adopting as our agents the Kentucky Christian Missionary Society, and the American Christian Missionary Society, we may actually preach the gospel to the unconverted in almost any part of the inhabited earth. We can, in this way, say to all the impenitent and disobedient in our own beloved commonwealth, Come to the Saviour. And in like manner, we can say to the poor, wandering prodigals of the east, and of the west, of the north and of the south, that they have a Father in heaven who pities them; who loves them; and

who has even sent his own dear and well-beloved Son to redeem them.

And O, who that has a heart to feel for the wants and the woes of humanity, would not glory and rejoice in such a privilege? Who that has ever tasted of the good word of God, and of the powers of the world to come, would not spend, and be spent in sustaining such a work of faith, and mission of love?

But I need not, and I will not, go farther into particulars in treating this subject. Enough has been said by way of illustration. You will now, doubtless, all concede, that in these last recorded words of our blessed and adorable Redeemer, there is given to the church—to the whole church—and to every member of the church, a commission to labor, *in every possible way*, ordained by heaven, for the redemption of our poor fallen world. Thank God there is no monopoly here. It is the duty, and the honor, and the privilege of ALL Christians, whether they be learned or unlearned, whether they be dumb or eloquent, whether they be rich or poor, whether they be bond or free, whether they be male or female, to strive together in the diligent use of heaven's appointed means for the edification of the church, and for the conversion and salvation of the world.

And, O, what a different world we would now have, if this commission had always been duly and properly regarded! if all the disciples of Christ had acted as faithfully under this second commission as the apostles did under the first! How many wars, and pestilences, and famines might thus have been avoided! How many of those in heathenish darkness might now be rejoicing in the full light of the glorious gospel! And, O, how many precious souls there are now in hell—among the wailings and agonies of the damned—forever weeping, but not in mercy's sight—O, how many of these lost ones might at *this* moment be tuning their golden harps among the re-

deemed in heaven, if salvation had only been freely and earnestly offered to them by those that have heard the gospel!

But it is even so. Our folly has made it so, and all our wisdom is now unavailing in such a case. Indeed, there is not in the whole universe a created arm, that can rescue one of these lost spirits from its awful doom, and give it a place among the saints in glory. The gulf that separates Gehenna and Paradise is impassible. God has himself forever fixed the destiny of the dead; and we can, of course, do nothing to effect a change in their condition.

But one thing, thank God, we can do. We can prevent others from going to this place of torment. To us has been committed the word of reconciliation; and we are constrained and exhorted by the love of God, by the infinite condescension of our Redeemer, by his agony on the cross, by the eloquence of his blood, by the power and efficacy of his resurrection, by the triumphs of his reign, by the energies of his Spirit, by the songs of the redeemed, and by the wailings and the agonies of the damned, to proclaim it to the people: to say to the unconverted everywhere, in Europe, in Asia, in Africa, and in America, Come to the Saviour; come to him who has loved you; who has bled for you, and who is willing and anxious to wash you from your sins in his own precious blood, and to make you kings and priests unto God forever and ever.

Brethren, will you do it? Will you all do it? Are you all willing to consecrate your bodies, and your spirits, and your time, and your talents, and your possessions to the honor and glory of God, for the salvation of the world? Are you willing and ready, at any sacrifice, to bear or to send to the benighted and perishing millions of our race, that blessed gospel which has filled our hearts with peace, and joy, and love; and that still cheers and illuminates our pathway:

"That shines along the heavenly road
That leads us to the blessed abode?"

Brethren, what say you? What do you all say in answer to this question? What do the fathers say in reply to it? What do the young brethren say? And what do the sisters say? What would the Marys say, if they were here to-day, and had a voice in the decision and final settlement of this question? What would Peter, and James, and John, and Paul, and all the martyred host of God's elect say, if they were here to-day. And what would Bro. Barton W. Stone, and Bro. John T. Johnson, and Bro. Wm. Morton, and Bro. Walter Scott, and Bro. Thomas Campbell, and the other glorious pioneers of the current reformation say, if they were present, and allowed to take part in our deliberations?

Ah, my dear hearers, we have already on record the stereotyped reply of all these sainted dead. Their zeal, and devotion, and energy in the cause of Christ, while they sojourned as pilgrims here below, is the very best answer that could be given to this question.

"Though dead, they speak in reason's ear,
And in example live;
Their faith, and hope, and mighty deeds,
Still fresh instruction give."

And the same, thank God, may be said of the example of many who are now present. Time will never efface the recorded deeds of these noble men, through whose instrumentality the cause of primitive Christianity has so gloriously triumphed in Kentucky. They belong to that category of moral heroes who will shine as the stars forever and ever. Daniel xii, 3.

But, brethren, why should we not *all* imitate these illustrious men—if not in their burning eloquence and adamantine logic—at least in their zeal and devotion to the cause

of our common Lord and our common humanity? I say, why should we not ALL do this?

I am fully aware of the many excuses that have been alleged as an apology for our continued slothfulness, yes, and parsimoniousness, in the cause of human redemption. And I am particularly aware of the fact, that the comparative failure of many modern missions has even been brought forward by some to prove that the gospel is no longer the power of God for the salvation of the world; that it wants the element, or adjunct, or circumstance of miraculous excitement, to make it effectual in arousing the dormant energies of the people; that nothing, in fact, can effect this but the personal coming of the Lord himself; and that we may, therefore, just as well be satisfied with the little that we are now doing, and patiently wait for his second personal return.

Brethren, do you believe it? Do any of you believe it? Are you disposed to embrace, or even to countenance, a theory or hypothesis, the legitimate tendency of which must ever be to discourage missionary effort; to relax the missionary energies of the church; and, of course, to retard the triumphs of the gospel throughout the world? Will any of you act so inconsistently with your high and holy calling? I hope not, brethren. I earnestly hope not. I know that these fathers will not do it. They have too long and too often witnessed the glorious triumphs of the gospel, to be now deceived and deluded by any such chimera of a bewildered imagination. And I earnestly hope and pray, that none of the young brethren or sisters present, will be guilty of such folly.

O no, my dear hearers; the fault is not in the gospel, but in ourselves. It is not owing to any want of adaptation or efficiency in the scheme of divine grace, but simply to our own slothfulness, and waywardness, and penuriousness that the ways of Zion now mourn, that the glory of

the church has been so much obscured; and that her triumphs over the nations have been so long delayed, and so very greatly retarded.

What we want, then, is simply action, *action*, ACTION; united, systematic, and co-operative ACTION, on the part of all the members of the church. Let *all* be usefully employed in some way. If a brother can not be a successful evangelist, he may perhaps be a good door-keeper in the house of God; if he can not be an efficient elder, he may make a good and faithful sexton. If a sister can not, like Phebe, be a deaconess, she may at least wash the saints' feet, or serve the church in some other capacity. Do not be alarmed, my sisters; we do not design to make slaves of you. But it is better—far better—to serve the church in any way, than to be at ease in Zion. Isa. xxxii, 9–15; and Amos vi, 1.

Let evangelists, then, and elders, and deacons, and editors, and all others in ecclesiastical authority and influence, see to it, that all disciples of Christ are doing something for his cause; that the old and the young, the rich and the poor, the bond and the free, the male and the female, are all habitually, and systematically, and unitedly employed in whatever sphere they can labor most appropriately and most successfully for the edification of the church, and the conversion of the world.

Let this be done, and then all else will very soon be done. Our children will be better educated both in the nursery and the Sunday School. Our prayer meetings, and all our other meetings for religious purposes, will be better attended, and the Lord's day, the Lord's Supper, and all the other ordinances of God's appointment, will be more perfectly sanctified to his service and to his glory. The church herself will greatly increase in vitality and spirituality; and also in her converting and sanctifying *power* over the nations. Under her influence,

"The brute-hearted temper of man will grow tame,
The wolf and the lion lie down with the lamb:
The bear with the kine will contentedly feed,
And children their young ones in harmony lead.
No more will the sound of the war-whoop be heard,
The ambush and slaughter no longer be feared;
The tomahawk buried shall rest in the ground,
And peace and good will to the nations abound.'

Then, dear brethren, let us never grow weary in well-doing. But let us all be steadfast, immovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord; forasmuch as ye know that your labor is not in vain in the Lord.

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SERMON XXII.

SIN AND ITS CURE.

BY AYLETT RAINS.

"For as by Adam all die, even so by Christ shall all be made alive; but every man in his own order." 1 Cor. xv, 22.

"Much more they who receive abundance of grace, and of the gift of righteousness, shall reign in life by Jesus Christ." Rom. v, 17.

This will exhibit itself from the nature of the topics which it is designed to embrace, under two general heads; 1. *Sin, or the disease.* 2. *The gospel, or the remedy, or cure.*

We shall now consider the evils of sin. That sin is in the world, no Christian denies. How diversified soever may be our opinions with reference to other facts, there can be none with respect to the prevalence of sin. It is agreed, too, that its nature is malignant—its consequences most appalling. If sin were limited to the present world—if it could not, by any possibility, molest us beyond the grave—we see enough of it here, enough of its turpitude and of its tendency toward the production of misery, to demonstrate that it is an evil fraught with infernal venom, every way injurious and destructive, and above all things to be dreaded and abhorred.

In respect to the origin of sin, we have often been asked such questions as the following: "Why did God permit evil to be introduced into the world?" "Why did he not constitute or organize Adam upon principles such as would have rendered him incapable of sinning?" In answer to these questions, and all similar ones, we have but little to

say. We have no disposition to perplex ourselves or our readers with bewildering speculations and disquisitions concerning things which have never profited those by whom they have been agitated. A few remarks, however, on these questions may not be without benefit to some plain, honest minds, which have been needlessly perplexed or confounded by unwarrantable speculations relative to the origin of sin.

We might ask, why did God so constitute water as that it will drown a man; and why did he permit fire to possess such properties, as that it burns the fingers of the cook, consumes the bodies of living men, and is in all respects, while a good servant, a furious and tyrannical master? A proper answer would be, that were fire and water deprived of those essential principles, by the misapplication or misuse of which physical evils are sometimes produced, they would cease to be fire and water, and would be, therefore, incapable of their beneficial results. The same is true in respect to man. To be a man, he must neither be a mole nor an eagle, a mere animal nor the archangel. He must be that link in the long chain of created beings to which we apply the term man. He must have all his native properties of soul and body—all his passions and appetites. And to be an accountable being, he must be a moral agent. He must be placed under law. He must be capable of obedience and disobedience. He must be capable of the feeling of approbation, on account of conformity to the law of God, and of disapprobation or guilt, on account of transgression. Any conceivable organization of human nature or constitution of the Divine government, in which these principles should not have been recognized, would have placed man, with respect to morality and immorality, in a condition such as is that occupied by the brutal tribes—as incapable of virtue and vice, of rewards and punishments, of moral elevation and

degradation, as is the mole, the oyster or the bat. He could have possessed no consciousness of merit nor of demerit, any more than a mere animal, or a clock, or a watch. The not conferring upon him those elements of nature, those faculties and powers, by the misdirection of which he might fall, would have deprived him of the ability to rise, and would, therefore, have cut him off forever from all those exquisite, those ennobling emotions consequent upon a sense of praiseworthiness, and of fitness for those rewards, rich with everlasting glory, which are treasured in the heavens for the obedient.

Evil, natural and moral, is incidental to the works of God, but forms no part of those works. "God can not be tempted with evil," and therefore is not, can not be the author of sin—"is the Father of lights"—"is light, and in him is no darkness," and, therefore, the source of darkness he can not be! Teeth were contrived as instruments with which to eat—not in order that they might ache; just as sickles were contrived, not that they might wound the fingers of the reaper, but to cut the waving, golden grain. So God endowed man with faculties to glorify God, and to enjoy him forever. If, therefore, moral evil has been produced, it is of human origin, and is incidental; the result of the perversion, misdirection or misapplication on the part of man, of those elements of his moral nature, which are as necessary to his moral weal as is the edge of the sickle to reaping, the heat of fire to render us comfortable, or certain properties of water to quench our thirst, to bathe our bodies, or to cleanse our clothing.

In strict accordance with these principles, Adam, being constituted a rational, a moral agent, was placed under law. The law under which he was placed, seems to have been well adapted to the incipient state of his knowledge and experience. "Of every tree of the garden," said God, "*thou* mayest freely eat; but of the tree of knowledge

of good and evil thou shalt not eat of it; for on the day thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die." Only one object, the fruit of one tree, in the midst of all the rich variety of trees and of fruits, with which the garden abounded, was prohibited the first happy pair. On the circumstances of the first temptation and sin, we need not expatiate. Suffice it to say, that the serpent beguiled Eve; Eve gave to her husband and he did eat. Sin, the source of death, was born; and death came into the world. A stream of ills, comparatively small, commenced its onward flow, widening as it ran, until its black and filthy waters inundated the whole earth.

Indeed, no sooner was the first transgression committed, than the malignant nature of sin began to be exhibited in its direful consequences. The eyes of our first parents were opened to contemplate the enormity of their crime, and they were overwhelmed with horror. Ashamed and affrighted, they sought concealment in the most retired recesses of Eden, foolishly imagining that they could hide themselves from the eye of God. But the Lord beheld them in their guilty retreat, penetrated their secret thoughts, and knew afar off the bitterness of their hearts. Adam attached the blame to his wife, and Eve to the serpent. But on their guilty heads the merited penalty must fall. God cursed the serpent, and he also cursed the ground for man's sake. And he declared to our first parents that this world should be to them a scene of sorrows and afflictions, of trials and woes, till they should return to the dust. He drove them from the garden, and placed cherubim and a flaming sword to keep the way of the tree of life, lest man, in his sins, should eat and live forever.

But sad and even heart-rending as are these facts, when considered with reference to our first parents, the darkness of the picture is greatly increased, when we contemplate the innumerable myriads of Adam's posterity, as all, to an

alarming extent, involved in the same dreadful ruin. Our first father, not only for himself, but as the father and social head of the human family, had been cut off from the tree of life. He had by one act forfeited his title to that estate, one very important, nay, invaluable item of which was this life-perpetuating tree. He had become a bankrupt. As, therefore, when a wealthy father turns spendthrift, and squanders his money or property, poverty and sometimes shame are entailed upon his children; or, as when, through luxury or other vices of parents, children are born the unhappy subjects of hereditary disease, so the posterity of Adam inherited a loathsome patrimony of evils on account of his defection from the divine law, as well as lost that which their father possessed in innocence; especially the tree of life by a continued participation of which they might have inherited the fruition of perpetual health and life.

Could we bring into one group, and place under our close inspection, all the miserable beings who have suffered on account of the first transgression; could we with one glance behold all their writhings and contortions; could their sighs, and groans, and tears, speak with emphasis into our ears the keenness of their pains, and the bitterness of their sorrows; could we behold them pale in sickness, cold in death, undergoing decomposition in the grave, then should we have in some good degree a view of the horrible nature of sin; For these are fruits or consequences of sin—the mementoes of God's righteous wrath against it—the indices which point to its malignity, its loathsomeness, its power to fit both soul and body for destruction in hell.

But dark as is this picture, the half is not yet portrayed. Had Adam been the only sinner, good would it have been for the family of man. The dreadful truth, however, is, *that* "all have sinned and come short of the glory of

God." Thus, as by Adam's sin, all mankind were made liable to death and all the miseries of the present life, so, by their own sins, have all mankind constituted themselves heirs of the second death and all the miseries of the world to come. But who shall describe the miseries of the future world! Neither the tongues of men nor of angels can give it an adequate expression. Only judgment and eternity can paint and exhibit this fiery picture. When the incorrigible shall stand in the presence of their Judge; when all their thoughts, and words, and actions shall be brought to light; when they shall be made to remember gospel privileges slighted, the great salvation despised, the authority of God contemned, the blood of the Lord Jesus trampled upon; ah! when sinking down into deep perdition, their souls, pierced with guilt, shrieking with terror, horrified with despair, will feel at their sensitive and convulsed center the inexpressible sinfulness of sin! "Cursed sin," they will say; "O, fools that we were to serve sin in yonder world! O, wretched men that we are! who shall deliver us from this burning perdition? O, this blackness of darkness! O, this never dying worm! O, this never ceasing fire!"

Sin is a moral disease, destructive of both soul and body. Its advances may be imperceptible, but its effects are certain and its influence as deleterious as its guilt is deep and its nature damning. Not the less is it to be dreaded, nor the less feebly resisted, when its invasion of the soul is soft and noiseless; when it whispers peace and safety to its victims, lulling them into quietness and repose. Ah, how deceitful! Like the consumption, it is a flattering disease, but more to be dreaded; being in cases greatly more numerous, mortal, and bringing about, not the death of the body, but the death of the soul. Its delusive quietude is as the calm that precedes the tornado. The cloud that seems to slumber above the horizon indi-

cates "the wrath to come." The thunderbolt is in its bosom, but you hear no sound! The lightning is there, but you see no flash. Another moment, and the atmosphere is fraught with death, and destruction flies abroad on the wings of the winds. The sinner's disease has almost reached a mortal crisis, but he feels not his danger. The farther the hateful influence spreads, instead of becoming the more alarmed, and seeking with greater earnestness for deliverance, the more besotted and infatuated does he become—the more are his faculties and moral feelings steeped in insensibility. "A little more sleep," says he; "a little more folding of the hands, a little more indulgence in sinful pleasure." The cloud bursts, the disease reaches its crisis, and the sinner is whelmed in everlasting ruin! O sin, eldest born of hell! how hast thou deluged the world with pollution and misery! In every direction we contemplate thy direful ravages, we behold thy devastating footsteps. Insatiate murderer! thou art stained with the gore of thousands! thou art red with the blood of souls! God hates thee with a perfect hatred; and shall men love thee, and embrace thee, and be thy ignoble vassals?

Even the Christian, renewed as he has been in the spirit of his mind, and daily experiencing the efficacious remedies of the great Physician, of sin-sick souls, feels that he has received a tremendous moral shock. He feels it in the shortness of his memory, in the defectiveness of his judgment, in the dimness of his reason, and in the sometimes capricious freaks of his imagination—he feels it in the coldness of his heart, in the lightness of his thoughts, in the barrenness of his mind, in the smallness of his joys, and in the poverty of his gratitude. He feels within him the law of sin and death—the flesh against the spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh. He feels that when he would do good, evil is present with him. He feels that in his

flesh dwells no good thing; and that before his body will be fitted to inhabit heaven, it must be changed from a natural to a spiritual body,—from a vile body to the likeness of the glorified body of our Redeemer.

Upon this awful subject what shall we say more? The time would fail us, were we to attempt to give the constituents of the whole black catalogue of sins, now prevalent among men;—the wraths, strifes, idolatries, heresies, envyings, immolations, murders, revelings, drunkenness, and such like! Sin is worse than Satan! for sin made him a Satan!—imparted to him all his diabolical principles, and clothed him with the horrid characteristics of the devil—all his subtilty, falsity, malignity, pride! And it is sin that makes, or will make men devils! Compare the most depraved, with the most excellent man. How great the difference! So is the difference between sin and righteousness! it is as the difference between heaven and hell! Think of the most depraved human being, with whom you have been acquainted, or of whom you have ever read, or heard. How degraded! Sin has sunk him thus low, and may sink him lower, and would eventually, were there no remedy, plunge the whole family of man, into the same yawning vortex of depravity. Thanks to God that a remedy for sin has been provided. That a physician has been sent us from beyond the skies, endued with all divine skill; possessed of all the treasure of wisdom and knowledge; furnished with the whole MATERIA MEDICA of heaven; whose bosom overflows with perfect benevolence; whose heart bleeds at every prospect of human woe—melts at every symptom of human sorrow.

> "He comes the broken heart to bind,
> The bleeding soul to cure;
> And from the treasures of his grace,
> To enrich the humble poor."

He has laid, in his own death, the foundation of human

redemption. He has tasted death for every man. He ever lives, the Christian's intercessor and advocate—the sinner's friend, able to save to the uttermost, all who will come to God by him.

II. Having now, as we know, very imperfectly sketched the consequences of sin, we proceed, as was proposed, to consider the

CURE.

This department of our subject, is of vital importance. In order, therefore, to present appropriate truth, with all practicable intelligibility and force, we shall exhibit, as the first step of the discussion, an analysis, both of the disease and of the remedy. In sin there are at least FIVE prominent characteristics. 1. The love of sin. 2. The practice. 3. The state. 4. The guilt. 5. The punishment.

In the Gospel, there are not less than FIVE points, or characteristics. 1. Faith. 2. Repentance. 3. Baptism. 4. Pardon. 5. The Resurrection.

1. FAITH destroys the LOVE of sin. 2. REPENTANCE, the PRACTICE. 3. BAPTISM, the STATE. 4. PARDON, the GUILT. 5. RESURRECTION, the PUNISHMENT.

To prevent mistakes, and to enable the reader to proceed with the greater satisfaction and intelligence, we would here offer a few explanatory remarks: 1. That when we affirm that the resurrection destroys the punishment of sin, we mean not that it delivers us from the punishment of our own sins; but that it saves us from the consequences of the sin of our first father! This, in the proper place, we hope to make apparent. 2. When we say that faith destroys the LOVE of SIN, we do not mean, that faith, considered in the abstract, accomplishes the work of destroying the love of sin; but that faith, connected with all the regenerating influences of the Gospel, destroys the love of sin, in all hearts which fully and unfeignedly believe the Gospel. Under this view of

the subject, the reader may observe, that we have not admitted into the present arrangement one point, which obtained in the first edition of this discourse—that the Spirit destroys the power of sin. The power of sin greatly consists, if not exclusively so, in its LOVE and GUILT. As, therefore, PARDON removes the GUILT, and faith, the love of sin, and as, also, the Spirit operates and produces all its purifying effects, and heavenly fruits, through Faith, we deem our present arrangement, much more neat and scriptural than was the former arrangement. We proceed now, without further circumlocution, or apology, to the capital points of this discussion.

FAITH.—It makes no part of our present plan to write a dissertation on the subject of faith. That it comes by HEARING, and this hearing, by the word of God (Rom. x, 17), that without it, we can not please God, or come to him (Heb. xi, 6); that all our works, which are to be esteemed good or righteous, are fruits of faith (Heb. xi, 33); that without faith we can not obtain a victory over the world, but by its mighty workings may come off more than conquerors (1 John v, 4); that the Christian lives by faith (Gal. ii, 20); walks by faith (2 Cor. v, 7); runs by faith (Heb. xii, 1); are truths, not only explicitly affirmed in the scriptures, but admitted by all who deserve to be ranked among the friends of our Redeemer.

Faith is to the moral machinery of the soul, what a main-spring is to a watch. When associated with all those principles and influences, with which the Gospel inspires the individual who believes with his heart unto righteousness, it puts all his moral faculties into motion. It propells the believer onward in the road of obedience. It enables him to obey from his heart the form of heavenly doctrine. It purifies his heart. It renews his mind. He is made a partaker of the divine nature. It is the medium through which he receives all things that pertain to life

and godliness (2 Pet. i. 2), and escapes the pollutions that are in the world, through lust; and will ultimately secure a permanant abode in the house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens.

There are various similes or illustrations by which the power of faith might be explained. We sometimes assimilate it to a telescope. We consider it as making visible the invisible, and as placing at a point apparently near to the observer, objects that are afar off. Thus we are enabled to contemplate all the facts and things revealed in the Bible. The Father, the Son, the Spirit—creation, providence, redemption—heaven, earth, hell—time, eternity, judgment—eternal life and eternal death—motives which strike at the foundation of our moral nature—considerations, the most weighty of which the human mind can possibly conceive, are not only rendered visible by faith, are not only brought near, but their relation to us is demonstrated. We are made to view them in the light of eternal truth. They are made to approach us, and to knock at the door of our hearts; and to pour into our souls a continual stream of spiritual influence, proportioned to the amount of our religious intelligence and faith. Thus, as when we look through a literal telescope at the literal heavens, an indescribable influence comes streaming down from each planet and sun, overwhelming us with emotions indescribably sublime; so, through the telescope of faith, we contemplate the heavens of religion, more glorious than the literal heavens, and from God, and Christ, and the Spirit—from the groans and blood of Calvary, and the saints' ultimate triumph—from the raptures of paradise, and the agonies of the damned—from every revealed object in time or in eternity—by the testimonies which originate and sustain our faith—by the promises which excite our hope, and by the threatenings which inspire us with godly fear, are our hearts filled with princi-

ples which stimulate, which purify, which elevate, which fill us with joy unspeakable and full of glory.

The word of God is said to be Spirit and life (John vi, 23); living and powerful (Heb, iv, 12); to live, and abide forever (1 Pet. i, 23), and to be the power of God unto salvation (Rom. i, 16). This powerful word being the basis of faith, and the atmosphere in which faith lives, and moves, and has its being, can not but impart to faith, or at least connect with it, its own potent principles. As when you receive a letter, in reference to the truth of which you have no doubt, which informs you of the death of a beloved relative, the words of the letter have power, from the very nature of the facts which it reveals, almost to break your heart, and to cause the streams of anguish to gush from both your eyes; so those facts and things which the gospel reveals, render the word "quick and powerful" —a hammer to break the heart, and a fire to melt it. Hence, it pleases God, by the foolishness of preaching, to save them that believe (1 Cor. i, 21). Hence, too, the preaching of the cross is the power of God (18th verse), and the world is crucified to the Christian, and he to the world (Gal. vi, 14). The spirit of truth becomes the spirit of faith, and the power of truth, which is the power and wisdom of God, the power of faith; as the life of truth is the life of faith. Truth, with all its wonder-working principles, is inseparably united, by the act of believing with faith in the truth believed. So that the fruits of faith are the fruits of the truth, and *vice versa* (Col. i, 6), and the fruits of the Spirit (Gal. v, 22); the Spirit of God being the spirit both of faith and the gospel (John xv, 26).

From the above it will be perceived that the faith of the gospel is not a mere inoperative or speculative principle. It works by love. It is intelligence in the head, and love in the heart. It is light and heat. It brings head and heart together, in a state of happy harmony. It teaches

that head-religion, without the heart, is cold and dead; while heart-religion, without the head, is ignorant or blind, and fanatical or enthusiastic. This faith, as it is a believing with the whole heart, takes the government of the whole man, leads the imagination and thoughts into the captivity of the obedience of Christ, and exhibits our religion, not upon the ends of our tongues only, but in a multitude of good works, like precious jewels, upon the ends of our fingers. The operative or fruit-bearing faith, will destroy the love of sin—will break down the power of darkness within us, by purifying the heart. Will renew us into the heavenly image—will save the soul. Call it historical, or what you may, still heaven will approve; for if the tree brings forth good fruit, it can not be an evil tree.

The operative faith, then, is adapted to the destroying of the love of sin, because by the potent and efficacious principles with which it inspires the believer, it regenerates him, or changes his heart, and makes him a new creature. The remedy, therefore, in so far as faith is concerned, is precisely adapted to the disease.

Believing that our first point is now satisfactorily proved and illustrated, we proceed to the second consideration.

Repentance.—Repentance destroys the practice of sin. But that this proposition may be rendered indisputable, we ask, What is repentance? As one step toward the obtaining of an answer of truth, we shall refer to the ninth, tenth and eleventh verses of the seventh chapter of the second epistle to the Corinthians. "For I rejoice not," says the apostle, "that ye were made sorry, but that ye sorrowed to repentance; for ye were made sorry after a godly manner, that ye might receive damage from us in nothing. *For godly sorrow worketh repentance* to salvation not to be repented of; but the sorrow of the world worketh death. For behold this self-same thing, that ye sorrowed after a godly sort, what carefulness it wrought in you," etc.

According to this text, repentance is preceded by "godly sorrow," therefore godly sorrow is not repentance. It is the cause, while repentance is the effect. The word here rendered repentance, is different from that in the 8th verse, rendered *repent*. This signifies mere regret; but that repentance which was the effect of goodly sorrow, evidently denoted a change of mind and of heart, which terminated in a thorough reformation of life. They put away the evil of their doings, as we learn from verse 11, in which Mr. Barnes very appropriately remarks as follows:

"We may learn what constitutes true repentance. There should and there will be deep FEELING. There will be CAREFULNESS, deep anxiety to be freed from sin. There will be a desire to remove it, INDIGNATION against it, FEAR of offending God, EARNEST DESIRE that all that has been wrong should be corrected, ZEAL that the reformation should be entire, and a wish that the appropriate REVENGE or expression of displeasure should be excited against it. The true penitent hates nothing so cordially as he does his sins. He hates nothing but sin; and his warfare with that is decided, uncompromising, inexorable, and eternal."

As farther proof that repentance is an INTERNAL change or amendment connected with an EXTERNAL reformation, let it be noted that when the men of Ninevah repented, "God saw their works, that they turned from the evil of their way" (iii, 10). They "believed God, and proclaimed a fast, and put on sackcloth" (v, 5), and the king commanded them "to turn every one from his evil way, and from the violence that was in his hands," (v, 8). To the same effect are those scriptures in which men are commanded to "cease to do evil, and learn to do well"—to "break off their sins by righteousness, and their transgressions by turning to the Lord;" and in which it is said, "Turn ye, turn ye, for why will ye die?" and "Let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts, and

let him return unto the Lord, and he will have mercy upon him, and to our God, for he will abundantly pardon." In all these cases, reformation is that which is most prominent as a fruit of repentance. And John the Baptist commanded the people to "repent and bring forth fruits meet for repentance." The case of the Pentecostians also is in point; for when Peter commanded them to repent, instead of being overwhelmed with sorrow, their hearts were filled with gladness. They were already sorry. They had been pierced in their hearts. This sorrow, therefore, wrought the repentance unto salvation which Peter commanded. It began in sorrow and sin, but terminated in gladness and reformation. Now, as repentance terminates in reformation, it follows that it destroys the practice of sin. This second position, therefore, being established, we proceed to a consideration of

BAPTISM. In baptism the state is changed. As to what that action or ordinance is, which is denominated baptism in the scriptures, we shall leave the reader to determine; only remarking in passing that whatever may be said in favor of pouring and sprinkling, it is certain that immersion is valid baptism. It is also a very significant and solemn ordinance; being an emblem of the burial and resurrection of our Lord; things which can not, in truth, be said of sprinkling and pouring. They are not emblems of any thing, and, therefore, in so far as emblematic significancy is concerned, are rites perfectly unmeaning. That either is an emblem of the outpouring of the Spirit, is an assertion perfectly gratuitous. Why, then, should a dying man prefer ordinances which, possibly or probably, are not baptism, and which fall infinitely short of the solemnity and emblematic import of immersion, to that which, in any view of the subject, is a valid and most significant baptism? Let piety and honesty, not bigotry and prejudice, answer this question!

But to the point. When a foreigner takes the oath of allegiance, he passes from the state of an alien into that of a citizen; when persons are married, they pass out of the single into the married state; so when penitent believers put on the Lord Jesus Christ, they pass out of the unpardoned into the pardoned state. Observe, we do not affirm that the state of a sinner is never changed except in baptism. What *may* be done *out* of baptism is no part of the present question. We have, however, no great liking for the principles of those persons who are always inquiring how nearly they may approach the precipice of disobedience without falling over. Is baptism a divine command? or is it an unmeaning ceremony? Does it convey any blessings to the obedient? What are those blessings? What say the scriptures? These are questions from which we can not turn away and be innocent.

"Baptism," say our Methodist brethren, "is not only a sign of profession and mark of difference, whereby Christians are distinguished from others that are not baptized, but it is also a sign of regeneration or the new birth. Art. 17. And on page 107 of the Discipline, they say: "We call upon thee for these persons, that they, coming to thy holy baptism, MAY RECEIVE REMISSION OF THEIR SINS by spiritual regeneration." The Presbyterian Confession of Faith, in answer to the 92d question, says: "A sacrament is a holy ordinance instituted by Christ, wherein, by sensible signs, Christ and the benefits of the New Covenant are represented, SEALED, AND APPLIED to believers." If, then, the Methodists and the Presbyterians are right in the articles just quoted, we can not be wrong; or, in other words, if "baptism is a mark of difference, whereby Christians are distinguished from others that are not baptized," and if in baptism, "by sensible signs, Christ and the benefits of the New Covenant are APPLIED to believers," certainly baptism must be an ordinance in which the state

is changed; and, if possible, the more certainly so should the prayer of the Methodists be answered in granting the remission of sins by spiritual regeneration. This, however, only by the way, in proof of our orthodoxy! Our appeal is to law and to the testimony.

It will, we presume, be granted by all, that if baptism is for the remission of sins, those who, in obedience to the gospel, are baptized, experience a change of state, that is, pass out of the unpardoned into the pardoned state. We affirm that baptism was, from the time of its first institution, for the remission of sins. "John did baptize in the wilderness, and preach the baptism of repentance for the remission of sins." Mark i, 4. "And he came into all the country about Jordan, preaching the baptism of repentance for the remission of sins." Luke iii, 3. "Repent and be baptized every one of you, in the name of Jesus Christ, for the remission of sins." Acts ii, 38. "And now why tarriest thou? arise and be baptized, and wash away your sins, calling upon the name of the Lord." Acts xxii, 16. "He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved." Mark xvi, 16. "Baptism doth also now save us." 1 Pet. iii, 21. "Know ye not that so many of us as were baptized into Jesus Christ, were baptized into his death." Rom. vi, 3. "For ye are all the children of God by faith in Christ Jesus; for as many of you as have been baptized into Jesus Christ, have put on Christ." Gal. iii, 26, 27.

We are utterly incapable of perceiving how any proposition could be more conclusively demonstrated, than is that which affirms that baptism is for the remission of sins, by the scriptures presented in the preceding paragraph. The testimony is positive, and most explicit. Not more fully can it be proved that Jesus is the Son of God; not more conclusively can any other proposition, within the whole range of human investigation and discussion, be sustained

by evidence; for evidence more explicit and positive, can not be adduced in proof of any proposition. May we not, then, say, that if any person will not believe from the force of these positive declarations of holy writ, neither would he be pursuaded, though one should rise from the dead!

Let it be deeply impressed upon the mind of the reader, that although we teach that baptism effects a change of state, yet, we do not believe that it effects this change in behalf of any who do not possess the faith and repentance of which we have spoken as prerequisites to its reception. A believing with the heart, and a repentance *in* and *from* the heart, we must possess before we can be recognized as qualified subjects of baptism. But, having these, "baptism," as Peter affirms, "saves us." Not baptism alone! "Eight souls were saved by water, not by water alone! Noah and his family believed and obeyed God; and in this faith and obedience were they saved from drowning. And we might add, that not in faith and obedience only were they saved, but in and by the ark, into which they were introduced by faith and obedience. Thus it is under the gospel. We are not saved by faith alone, by repentance alone, by baptism alone, by grace alone, by hope alone, by blood alone, by the word alone, by the Spirit alone, nor by any other one thing alone. As "man does not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceeds out of the mouth of God," so we "purify ourselves," not by any one thing alone, but "in obeying the truth" (1 Pet. i, 22), seeing that in obedience we become the subjects of the concentrated energy of all the gracious means appointed for our salvation. We are baptized INTO Christ, and have "put on Christ;" we are, therefore, saved in our ARK, Christ Jesus, by baptism, with which baptism is connected faith, repentance, the blood of Christ, the grace of God, all the saving energies and influences which God has been pleased to appoint in order to a perfect and most gracious

salvation. Or, to change the illustration, as mother Eve, by the internal act of believing a lie, and the external act of eating the forbidden fruit, passed out of a state of innocence into one of guilt, so we, by a cordial belief of the gospel, in our heart, and an external submission to it from our heart, pass out of the unpardoned into the pardoned state. "We obey from the heart the FORM of doctrine, and are THEN made free from sin, and become the servants of righteousness. (Rom. vi, 17).

We have not space in this discourse, for an extended discussion of this subject. One additional effort, however, we will make to convince the reader—if, indeed, he is not already convinced—that baptism is for the remission of sins. The reader will please to take his book, and turn to the second chapter of Acts of Apostles. In the 38th verse, Peter commands the penitents to "repent, and be baptized for the remission of sins." Now, the circumstances of the case prove incontrovertibly, that at the time at which this command was given, these penitents were in an unpardoned state. Their hearts were bleeding with conviction, and burning with remorse. In the bitterness of their pierced hearts, they were crying for mercy, were pleading to know whether or not, pardon could be extended to blood-stained, heaven-daring, hell-deserving sinners, such as they felt themselves to be. That sudden springing up of joy, which, by modern anxious-seat revivalists, is held as an evidence of pardon—but certainly without scripture authority—they felt not, but in its stead, dread alarm—inexpressible purterbations. We have a right, therefore, to consider them unpardoned at the point of time at which the apostle commands them to be baptized for remission of sins; and if unpardoned, it follows, that they could not otherwise have understood the apostle, than as teaching, that if they would repent and be baptized, their sins should be pardoned. This, together with the

commission law—"He that believeth and is baptized, shall be saved," or pardoned—make assurance doubly sure; and we can not perceive how any person, who venerates the Bible, can withhold his assent from this doctrine, unless it may be accounted for by reference to the stubbornness of the human will; for, as the poet has said,

"A man convinced against his will,
Is of the same opinion still."

PARDON.—This destroys the guilt of sin. "The blood of Jesus cleanses us from all sin." It "sprinkles us from an evil conscience." "We have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins." We "are justified by his blood." The death and resurrection of Jesus, are the great foundation facts of our holy religion—"He was delivered for our offenses, and rose for our justification." He entered the heavens by his own blood, and is there our High Priest, to intercede for us, and to make reconciliation for our sins. Upon the sacrifice of Jesus on Calvary, and the offering of himself without spot to God, do we found our hope, in respect to the eternal inheritance. Without the shedding of his blood, there could be no remission. Glory, and honor, and power, and praise, and blessing, and majesty, be unto him that sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb forever and ever!

From the whole premises, then, this is our conclusion. Pardon destroys the guilt of sin through the mercy of God, and the blood of Jesus. The water of baptism can not cleanse from sin. But the blood of Jesus can cleanse us, when in the water, from all our past sins. The reader, perhaps, believes that the blood can cleanse from sin, at an anxious seat, in the atmosphere, on dry land. And, pray, why may not the blood of Jesus, as well cleanse the believing penitent in the water? Why not, we would say, better be cleansed by this blood, in baptism,

as "BAPTISM DOTH EVEN NOW SAVE US." Does baptism save us without blood? Every place under heaven is suitable, with some people, for remission of sins, but that place which God has explicitly appointed.

But not only does the blood of Jesus cleanse from the sins committed anterior to baptism; it also removes the guilt consequent upon sinning after we have become Christians. "If we [Christians] confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness." (1 John i, 9.) Thus is the heart purged from an evil conscience, and the conscience from dead works, through life. Thus is the ever rankling thorn of guilt extracted from the human soul. And, hence, it will be, that, upon the banks of deliverance, the Christian, whilst unearthly transport swells his bosom, and one thrilling ecstacy after another, inexpressible and full of glory, exhilarates his spirit, shall sing, "Thou hast loved us, and washed us from our sins in thine own blood, and hast made us kings and priests unto God, and we shall reign forever."

RESURRECTION.—This destroys the punishment consequent upon the sin of our first father. The process exhibited under the four preceding heads, presents a perfect remedy for all our personal sins. By faith, the love of sin is destroyed; by repentance, the practice of sin; by baptism, the state of sin; and by pardon, the guilt. But renewed, as the Christian is, in the spirit of his mind, his regenerated soul remains incarcerated in a mortal dying body—a body of sin and death. Oppressed with labors, and infirmities, and afflictions, he sighs and groans, and prays for deliverance. He anticipates, through the hope of the Gospel, the bright, salubrious morn when he shall be delivered from the bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty of the children of God; when his vile body shall be changed, and fashioned like unto the glorious

body of our Lord Jesus Christ. Nor shall he groan, and hope in vain. When Jesus shall make up his jewels, he shall sing the brilliant, ecstatic song of a resurrection triumph: "O! death, where now thy sting! O! grave, where now thy victory! Thanks be to God who giveth us the victory, through our Lord Jesus Christ." Then the cure of the soul and body shall be complete. "God will wipe away all tears from the eyes of the righteous; and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, nor pain." There, natural bodies shall have become spiritual bodies. We shall be like Jesus, and see him as he is. But what will be the breadth, and length, and depth, and hight of our bliss and glory; neither human nor angelic eloquence can tell. It doth not yet appear what we shall be! but our inheritance shall be an infinite, and an eternal weight of glory. But we must hasten to the conclusion of this discourse. And in order to reach this point in the most profitable manner of which we are capable, we must be permitted to remark briefly on three classes of our race. 1. Infants and idiots. 2. Those who obtain pardon in this life, and die in a state of justification. And, 3. Those who live and die in their sins.

1. INFANTS AND IDIOTS.—The scriptures teach that God requires of every person according to his ability—according to what a man has, and not according to what he has not—according to his talents, whether one, two, or five; and that to him that knoweth to do good, and doeth it not, to him it is sin. But infants and idiots know neither good nor evil, have no talents, possess no moral ability, and, therefore, can not be guilty of personal sin. Being, however, involved in the consequences of Adam's sin, without any act of their own, the second Adam will, without any act of theirs, redeem them from all these consequences. As the offense came upon ALL to condemnation, so will the free gift come upon ALL to justification

of life (Rom. v. 18). Thus, through the righteousness of Christ, and without faith, repentance, baptism, or the performance of any other conditions, will all infants and idiots be saved with an everlasting salvation.

2. THOSE WHO OBTAIN PARDON, AND DIE IN A STATE OF JUSTIFICATION.—These, as well as infants and idiots, will need no other salvation, at the last day, than that which consists in a resurrection unto life, and the glory which will follow.

3. THOSE WHO LIVE AND DIE IN THEIR SINS.—These too, will be saved from all the consequences of Adam's sin. But their own sins will be their ruin. They would not have Christ to reign over them. They would not come to him that they might have life. They dispised all his counsels, and would have none of his reproofs. A resurrection, therefore, shall be theirs, but it shall be a resurrection unto damnation. The fault will be theirs, not Gods. They will be self-destroyed, having plucked down upon their own heads fiery, eternal destruction.

In addition, we shall present one argument against Calvinism: one against Restorationism: and one against Skepticism.

1. CALVINISM.—It is by virtue of certain relations which exist between all men and the first Adam, that this sin affects them, and they are brought to the grave. Now, as the second Adam will raise all mankind from the grave, he must have sustained a relationship to all. But if there be a part of mankind, for which Christ did not die, that part can not be raised from the dead; just as if, with reference to a part of mankind, Adam had not sinned, that part would not have died. Those systems of Calvinism, therefore, which deny that Christ died for all, are as certainly false, as it is certainly true that all will be raised from the dead.

2. UNIVERSALISM.—We have seen that, in order to our

redemption from temporal death, Jesus must have died that death for us. We arrive at this conclusion from the utter impossibility of imagining that the death of Christ would be a prerequisite to our redemption from one death, and not from another. But as Jesus has not died the SECOND DEATH for any man, therefore, there is no redemption from the second death. It follows, consequently, that Restorationism is false.

3. SKEPTICISM.—We have seen how admirably the FIVE POINTS of the gospel—each to each—is adapted to the removal of the *five points* of sin. Was there ever a more beautiful or wonderful adaptation? Surely the unbeliever will not say that this adaptation is a work of chance, or a production of clumsy priests! As well might he say that the adaptation of the glove to the fingers, of light to the eye, of sound to the ear, and of truth to the conscience; or that all the numerous adaptations, human and divine, in the whole universe, are works of chance. Men have never searched sufficiently deep into human nature, nor been so profoundly versed in moral pathology, as to invent a system such as is the gospel. No wisdom short of his, who needed not that any should testify to him of man, for he knew what was in man, was adequate to this adaptation. Hence, all systems of religion merely human, and perhaps all systems of education are greatly defective; but the Christian religion reaches the whole man; it anticipates all his wants; it presents a remedy for all his moral maladies; it purifies, elevates, glorifies him, and fits him for the most exalted heavenly society and enjoyments. This is the Lord's doing, and marvelous in our eyes. The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with all who love him sincerely.

SERMON XXIII.

JUSTIFICATION BY FAITH.

BY AARON CHATTERTON.

"What shall we say then? The Gentiles, who followed not after righteousness, have attained to righteousness, even the righteousness which is of faith; but Israel, which followed after the law of righteousness, hath not attained to the law of righteousness. Wherefore? Because they sought it not by faith, but, as it were, by the works of the law."—ROM. IX, 30–32.

MARTIN LUTHER and others of the early reformers taught the doctrine of justification by faith, in opposition to the Romish doctrine of justification through meritorious works. In this the reformers were right; but while they were right in this, they were in error in opposing faith to gospel obedience, or in advocating justification by faith *only*. This, we think, will appear evident as we proceed in the investigation of the subject.

In the scripture which we have read, the apostle assigns the reason why the Jews did not attain to righteousness or justification, because they sought it by the works of the law, and not by faith; and the Gentile was justified because he sought it by faith, and not by the works of the law. From this it is plain,

1. That justification is by faith;

2. That it must be sought for by faith; and,

3. That, as God's methods are uniform, all who do seek for it by faith obtain it.

These positions need no argument to sustain them, as, I presume, they are evident to all. And now, with these

truths fixed in the mind, we proceed to a more minute examination of the import of the language of the text. And to begin, we can do no better than to examine the little word FAITH. It lies at the very foundation of our investigation. What is faith? Can we understand it? or is it incomprehensible? Surely a righteous God would not suspend our salvation upon something which we can not understand. There is only one single word which is its equivalent, and that is *belief*. Faith and belief are constantly used interchangeably in the New Testament. Take one example among many (Heb. ii, 6): "But without *faith* it is impossible to please him; for he that cometh to God must *believe* that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him." All learned divines quote those texts which contain the word *believe* or *belief*, when they descant upon faith, and the general admission will save us the trouble of further argumentation. Then, we submit,

Proposition I. Faith is *belief*.

Do you ask me to define belief? I think not. All know what it is to believe or disbelieve. If any thing were announced to you, of which you had no knowledge, it would be an insult to your intelligence for me to attempt to explain to you what *belief* is, in order that you might determine whether you believed or not. Nor would I disparage your intelligence less, by attempting to explain what it is to believe *in* a person, as a statesman, physician, or any thing else, in order for you to determine whether you really believed *in* him or not. Common sense and common experience furnish the explanation. Many have mystified the word *faith*, but very few have undertaken to mystify the word *belief*, its equivalent, for the reason that the absurdity of the attempt would be too glaring. We shall not stop to inquire how faith comes. The method of investigation, which we propose, does not demand it. It is enough that we read, "Faith comes by hearing the word of God."

But if it were admitted that something in addition to the word of God were necessary to produce faith—as a secret influence of the Holy Spirit—still the important question would be, *what* must we believe in order to be accounted believers in the gospel sense? In other words, *what* and *how much* must our belief embrace? This leads us to

Proposition II. *Faith is the belief of the gospel, neither more nor less.*

Do any dissent from this? Let each, in his own mind, say yea, or nay. Say, if a person believes the whole gospel, "without exception and without a doubt," what more is he required to believe? And where is that "something more," to be found? Where has God required us to believe what he has never mentioned? Suppose we say that a person may believe only a part of the gospel, and have the required faith; then, we ask, what part may he reject and still have saving faith? In what item may he decide that God's testimony is false, with impunity? The thing is absurd, and you are perhaps ready to say, Why attempt to prove what no one denies! Very well, we only wanted it fixed in your mind, and we are very glad that thus far there is no dissent.

Faith being the belief of the gospel, it will next be necessary for us to settle the question, What is the gospel? What does it include? What are its elements? This is necessary to know the items which our faith must include. We know that the gospel is *glad tidings;* but we must know what makes up these glad tidings; and, then, if we believe it all, we can know that we have the required faith. We then say,

1. *Facts* are a part of the gospel. We mean those things which God has done for us through Jesus Christ. Christ died; was buried, and rose again, and ascended to heaven, and has made an offering for sin. These are facts, *without* which we could have no gospel. (See 1 Cor. xv.)

There is no room for dissent here, nor any disposition to dissent.

2. *Promises* are a part of the gospel. This is evident. Suppose it had been preached that Christ was the Son of God, that he died, was buried, and rose again; but nothing had been said about our interest in that death and resurrection, think you it would have been *glad tidings* to us? By no means. Hence the facts and blessings for men are combined, as "Christ died *for our sins*," or for the remission of our sins; "He rose *for our justification*," and it "Behooved him to suffer, that repentance and *remission of sins* should be preached in his name, among all nations." The blessed gospel has in it "exceeding great and precious promises"—remission of sins, the gift of the Spirit, and eternal life. There is no dissent here; there can be none. Now, suppose the gospel declared that Christ died that we might obtain the remission of our sins and eternal life, and yet we were not told *how* we could obtain these blessings;—suppose there were promises, exceeding great, but we were not told how we might receive and enjoy them —would the glad tidings be complete? Surely not. Then we say—

3. *Means or commands* are a part of the gospel. You can not well dissent here, for all the preachers in the land talk about "*the means of grace*," referring to the ordinances; and if they are not in the gospel, where are they to be found? Are they not gospel means? Besides (and this is better), Paul uses the phrase, "Obey the gospel," which is without meaning, if the gospel contains no commands; for we can not obey *facts* or *promises*, but only *commands*. We are now ready for

Proposition III. The gospel is made up of *facts*, *commands*, and *promises*. Let us put our three propositions together now:

1. Faith is belief; 2. This belief must embrace the

whole gospel: 3. The gospel is composed of facts, commands and promises—

Therefore, a belief alike of the facts, commands, and promises of the gospel, "is the faith of the gospel." This conclusion can not be avoided. Hereafter, then, when you read in the scriptures that men are "justified by faith," please remember what this faith necessarily includes, and remember how much is to be believed. Sinners must believe the great facts, and confide in the promises of the gospel, but that faith must embrace commands. "I am not so certain," say you. Yes, and here is where the great blunder of protestant theologians upon this subject begins. Laud faith as they may, they make it to include too little! Their position may be illustrated by the following supposed case, viz.:

A friend of yours, who had no faith in physicians, is sick nigh unto death. You are alarmed for him. You refer him to your favorite physician, telling him what success has attended his practice in similar cases. He believes you, and starts a messenger in hot haste for the man of medicine. The doctor arrives, examines the case, speaks hopefully, is certain that he can effect a cure. The joy of hope shows upon the pallid countenance of the sick man, and he says: "Doctor, from what I have learned of you, I believe you can do as you say." Here seems to be confidence. The doctor turns to the table to fix up some remedies, when the languid eye of the patient is turned toward him, and he asks in a feeble voice, "What is that you are doing, doctor?" The physician replies, "I am preparing some remedies suited to your case, which I wish you to take punctually, as I direct." "Ah! doctor," says the patient, "I can have nothing to do with your medicines." "What!" says the doctor, "did you not say that you had confidence in me, that I could cure *you*?" "Yes," says the sick man, "but it was *you* I had

faith in, and not in pills and powders." What would the good physician say to him? About this: "Sir, he that rejects my remedies, rejects me; and he that has no confidence in what I prescribe, as *means* of healing, has no confidence in me. I must leave you to your fate."

There may be, and doubtless are, those who say they believe in Jesus, the great Physician of souls; but so soon as he *prescribes* something for them to do, they say they have no confidence in it. "Our faith is in thee, O, Lord! and not in thy commands—they are *non-essential!*" How significant is the challenge of the apostle James: "Show me thy faith, without thy works, and I will show thee my faith by my works."

With this definite view of the subject, how well can we dispense with some of the unscriptural phraseology, which some people use in speaking of faith. They talk about the "faith of assent," and the "faith of assurance," and the "faith which takes no denial," etc., etc., and yet Paul says, there is but "one faith." But you ask: "Is there not such a thing as *assent*, as distinct from *assurance?* True: but see what constitutes Gospel faith. There are facts, embraced by our faith; but we can only *assent* to facts: promises are embraced by our faith; but can only *confide* in promises. Commands are embraced in our faith; but we can only *consent* to commands. Neither assent, confidence, nor consent *alone* is faith—they all are necessary to make the "one faith" of the Gospel; and he that lacks either, lacks too much to admit of his salvation. "What God has joined together, let not man put asunder."

PROPOSITION IV. *Persons having the required faith, have yet something to do before they are justified.*

This is proved by the text, which teaches that those who were justified, *sought* for it by *by faith.* This *seeking* is doing something. Let it be distinctly borne in mind,

that the way we are justified by faith, is in *seeking* for justification by faith. This matter of *seeking*, or *doing*, has been too much overlooked. Well, if one seeks by faith, he must first have the faith, and then do the seeking. So the order is—first faith, then seeking, then justification. Some appear to think, that all the seeking is for faith, and that when we obtain faith, we are then justified. But this would not be seeking *by* faith, but *without* faith! Quite a difference! If a person should be told to seek for treasure by the light of a candle, he would not be silly enough to think that when he got the candle, he would at the same time, and with it, find the treasure! But he obtains the candle first, and does the seeking *by* its light. As long as it is written, "Seek for justification by faith," there is no warrant for saying to sinners: "Only believe; as soon as you believe, you will be justified;" for if that were true, no one could seek justification by faith. And thus we perceive that the doctrine, "We are justified by faith only, is a most wholesome doctrine, and very full of comfort;" is in reality a most *unwholesome* doctrine, and very full of delusion; for it contradicts the true scripture doctrine of justification by faith; for whosoever will stop with the *alone*, will fail to seek, and without seeking, he shall not find justification.

But now comes a most important question: *What is it to seek by faith?* It is not to seek by our natural sight; nor is it to seek by our feelings; but it is to seek according to the direction of one, in whom we have confidence. If we seek for health by faith in a physician, in whom we rely, and use the remedies which he prescribes; if we substitute the remedies of another, we substitute faith in another, for faith in him. If we use our remedies, we substitute *self-confidence*, for faith in him. So also, if we adopt means of justification recommended by others, and not found in the Gospel, we substitute faith in

poor fallible men, for faith in God; or, if we adopt our means, we substitute *self-confidence*, for faith in God!

When the prophet of God told the Syrian captain, that by dipping himself seven times in the Jordan he should be healed of his loathsome leprosy, there was only one way for him to exercise his faith; and that was to go where the word of the Lord told him to go, and to do as the word told him to do. So far as the promise was concerned, the nobleman seemed to have faith sufficient; but his *imagination*, as to the *place* where he should be cleansed, had well nigh proved his ruin. The road to the Jordan was the only road upon which he and faith could travel in company; for *there* went God's directions. On the road to either of the rivers of Damascus, he would have had the *sole* company of imagination, and, poor thing! however much she may flatter on the road, she gives no blessing at the end. Faith can never go where the word of God does not go. Nor can we *seek* by faith, nor *walk* by faith, only by obeying God's commands. The path of faith is the path of obedience.

It is a species of unbelief—a want of confidence in God, which leads any one to reject the means of God's appointment. Blind imagination may lead one to try means of his own invention, or to try experiments, recommended by others, but the man of faith needs no *experiment;* his faith is in his God, and he is fully assured, that the directions of his God will lead to the desired favor. We state it as a proposition.

PROPOSITION V. *To seek for justification by faith, is to do all that God requires of the believers, in order to justification.*

We are here led to a thought which *is* "full of comfort," viz: That in *seeking by faith, the blessing is certain.* There is the most absolute certainty in the matter—just as certain, as that "God can not lie"—"he is faithful that promised." If God says, do this, and I will bless you, if

we do, he will bless. Not a son of Adam, from the foundation of the world, has ever sought by faith for a blessing from the great God, who has not obtained it. This faith, the only true faith, which takes God at his word, which embraces the whole Gospel, *means* and all, is the faith that *gets* no denial.

And I wish here to bring another thought to bear upon your minds, and that is, that *faith never expects a blessing, only when and where it is promised.* If God has promised a blessing in the use of certain *means*, no one can *believingly* expect it, without using the means as directed. If God promises a blessing in a certain place, faith can expect the blessing only in that place. You can all see that this is true, but I will illustrate. You profess to have confidence in my word. I tell you that I have deposited one hundred dollars for you at St. Louis, which is subject to your order. There would certainly be good news in this. But you say you believe the money is accessible to you, but you insist that you can get it at Davenport, where I reside, just as well. Would this be an evidence of faith in me? Certainly it would manifest a want of confidence in my word. And you might go down the river and near the city of St. Louis, and say, "You say the money is in St. Louis, but I *think* it is at Quincy, and being *honest* in my opinion, I can get it there!" This again would be to disbelieve my word. No, your faith must go with my words, to the specified place, St. Louis, if you would realize the thing promised.

The case of Naaman will answer to illustrate again. The prophet said he should be healed, upon his dipping himself seven times in the Jordan. Suppose he had said, "I will go to the banks of the river, and as soon as I get there I am sure I shall be cleansed; I have great faith in the mercy and goodness of the God of Israel, *and* certainly, if I *honestly* think he will cleanse me on

the bank of Jordan, he will do it." Might not his more sensible servant in that case, have said to him, "Master, faith is not to believe what God has *not* said, but what he does say. God, by the prophet, promised that you should be cleansed, upon the condition of your dipping seven times *in* Jordan; and therefore you must go down into the river and *dip*, according to the word of the Lord, the *seven* times, if you would be healed."

There are too many, in these gospel times, who profess faith so strong that they presume to find blessings where God never promised them. They *think* God will do something *when* and *where* he has not promised it. In short, they have such strong faith, that they *honestly think* that God will do what he has not promised to do! Now, this is not faith, but unbelief! When God said to Abraham, "Depart into a land that I will shew thee, and I will bless thee, make of thee a great nation," etc., had Abraham gone into Greece, or Egypt, instead of Canaan, where God directed him—though he might certainly have thought that the promise would have been fulfilled—there would have been no faith about his proceeding; and we are sure there would have been no blessing. Now, Abraham had faith, and that made him faithful, and his faithfulness made him the friend of God, and the father of all the faithful of after ages. And we can not be one of Abraham's seed and heirs according to the promise, only as we "walk in the footsteps of Abraham's faith." So teaches Paul. Abraham's faith was to him a great blessing, but for the reason that when God commanded, "he obeyed and went out, not knowing whither he went." He gave up his own will to be controlled and directed by the will of God, and yielded to the divine direction in all things.

We see, then, how that faith denies itself and spurns the counsels of mere men, where God commands. And we are authorized to say that faith never led a man to

neglect a command of God, however small or simple it may seem. It never led a man to expect the fulfillment of a promise, till the conditions were complied with. It never led a man to a human institution for pardon of sins; or to try experiments, to see whether God would pardon or not. To apply this to things in modern times: We go to the *confessional.* There bows a poor subject, and confesses a catalogue of sins to the priest, and the priest pronounces—"I absolve thee." But does the subject go to the confessional by faith? Does he confess to the priest by faith? No, for God does not command him to go there. The word of God says nothing about such proceedings, and where the word is silent, faith can not exist. He may have a kind of faith, viz.: faith in the priest; but faith in God he has not. Again, there is a religious interest in a community, because a protracted meeting is in progress. You go, and see them conducting people up to something called a *mourner's bench*, to be prayed for, to obtain pardon. But do any persons go there by faith? No where has God appointed the institution in his word. If you will open your Bibles and read, you will become satisfied that God's book is as silent about the *mourner's bench*, as it is about a pilgrimage to Mecca! People who go there, may go by faith in a preacher, who tells them, "this plan has been tried a hundred years"—not eighteen hundred; but by faith in God they can not go there, any more than Abraham could have gone to Greece by faith in God, when God had sent him in a different direction; or Naaman to Abana or Pharphar, when God commanded him to go to the Jordan and dip.

Faith never runs away from God's appointments to try human expedients. If a man could be justified by submitting to an institution of men, it would not be justification by faith at all, but by *imagination.* And when a *man begins* with blind imagination, he can only end in the

same way. They imagine that God will pardon them by means of an institution seventeen hundred years younger than God's plan of justification—the gospel; and they experiment, and they *imagine* themselves pardoned. They turn away from the commands of God, and the promise connected therewith, to watch their inward impressions, and when these appear to be right, they *think* they are pardoned. However much of *feeling* there may be in all this, faith in it there is not.

But it is said by some, that those who say that the sinner must obey the gospel in order to justification, do not believe in justification by faith. Poor human nature is ever prone to charge others with its sins. I can safely turn to the accuser, and say, "Thou art the man!" Whenever gospel obedience is ignored, faith is discarded; and to talk about faith justifying, while the means of seeking by faith are rejected, is an absurdity! It is emphatically true, that while a man holds forth to sinners the gospel precepts, he is the true advocate of justification by faith; and his opponents are the real opposers of the doctrine. We urge then the gospel means, not to oppose justification by faith, but because it is the only way that we can preach it. Remember, my friends, the Bible does not say that we are justified by faith *only*. The "*only*" is found in some human creeds, but not in the Bible. I was asked, not long ago, what objections I had to the doctrine of justification by faith *only*? I answered, only two: 1st. The Bible nowhere says it is true; and 2nd, The Bible says it is not true; "A man is justified by works, and not by faith only," says the apostle James. But we may say, "If we only have justifying faith, I think we will be justified before we obey." *Justifying faith!* what kind of faith is it? Dead or living faith? You say, "*Living faith.*" Then whenever we read in the scriptures that persons were justified by faith, we may know that a *living* faith is meant?

Certainly, you say. Now, let me open this old dictionary, at a portion made out by one James, and read a definition or two:—

DEAD FAITH—*Faith without works.*

LIVING FAITH—*Faith with works.* James 2d chapter.

How, let me ask, do you like this old Jerusalem Lexicographer? It is a settled rule, that the meaning of a word will make just as good sense in a passage, as the word itself. Let us read a little that way: Rom. v, 1—"Therefore being justified by faith *with works*, we have peace with God, through our Lord Jesus Christ." Gal. iii, 24—"Wherefore the law was our school-master to bring us to Christ, that we might be justified by faith *with works!*" The gospel dictionary is death to the claims of a dead faith; that is, faith alone. But does not Paul repudiate "works" in the matter of justification? True, but what kind of works? He is speaking of circumcision and other works of the Jewish law, and not works of faith, or gospel obedience. He that can not see the distinction, has read the Bible to but little purpose.

But to make this matter very plain, let us turn to the great commission, as recorded by Luke and Mark. Here we have "remission of sins," mentioned by Luke, and "shall be saved," by Mark, relating to the same thing. Now, to have one's sins forgiven, is to be *saved* in the sense in which these terms occur in the commission. And to be *pardoned*, and to be *saved*, is simply to be *justified.* Now read the commission, and see if more is not required in order to enjoy the promise of remission of sins, pardon, or justification, than simply to believe. Luke says, "Repentance and remission of sins shall be preached," etc. And in Mark the Saviour says, "Go preach the gospel to every creature; he that believeth and is baptized, shall be saved," etc. Two things are here required of the believer

in order to his justification, namely, "repentance" and "baptism."

The apostles began to carry out this commission at Pentecost, and they express exactly what was in the commission. Peter preached the facts of the gospel, the death, burial, resurrection, and coronation of Christ; and also the promise of salvation. Thousands are convicted and desired to be saved. And they inquired, "Men and brethren, what shall we do?" Now mark, their faith was only partial when they made the inquiry. No doubt they heartily believed all that they had heard; but they had not yet heard all the gospel. This is what they are inquiring after. They are anxious to learn the means by which they may enjoy the promise, and it would have been sad news to them indeed, if the apostle had said, "There are no means provided." But, on the contrary, he said, "Repent and be baptized, every one of you, in the name of Jesus Christ, for the remission of sins, and you shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit." Acts ii, 38. Now, these people had the gospel preached to them complete. Did they believe it all? Yes; three thousand did, at least. For "they that gladly received his word (this is faith) were baptized (having repented, of course), and this day were added to them about three thousand souls. They were justified by faith, when they obeyed the gospel. They heard the facts of the gospel, with the divine testimony; this begat conviction, and made them desire salvation. They believed in the means when they heard them announced, and became willing to seek justification by faith, through the means of God's appointment.

But we have not yet mentioned *confession*—the confession of Jesus. In the conversion of the Ethiopian, we learn that he confessed Jesus—"I believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God;" and Paul says, "With the mouth confession is made unto (*eis*—in order to) salvation." So we

must also believe in confession as one of the means of pardon, and as a prerequisite to baptism. And again; when Ananias came to Saul of Tarsus, he told him to "arise and be baptized, calling on the name of the Lord." Then, "calling on the name of the Lord" in connection with baptism, is a means of pardon. Now we come to our final proposition.

Proposition VI. *The gospel requires the believer to repent, confess his faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, and be baptized, calling on the name of the Lord, in order to remission of sins or justification.*

RECAPITULATION.

Now, that we have gone through with the different points in our discourse, we will glance at the several positions taken, that all may see whether there be any room for dissent.

1. Faith is *belief*. The two words are used in the Bible as equivalents, and also by all scholars and divines, both orthodox and heterodox. To this, then, all will agree.

2. This belief embraces the gospel, neither more nor less. Are we right here? Think. If the sinner must believe more than is contained in the gospel, please state what it is. Tell us in what book that "more" is to be found. If he may believe less, please state what part he may consider *false*, and still be a true believer.

3. The gospel includes facts, commandments, and promises. If it does not include *facts*, then there is *no* Christ crucified in it! If it does not include commands, then we can not obey it; which would contradict Paul! And if it does not embrace promises, there is no remission of sins and eternal life in it! But all these are embraced in the gospel, which must be believed, and, therefore, we are certainly right here.

4. After a person has this faith, he yet has something

to do; that is, to *seek*, before he has the promise of justification. This is taught in the text; and this *seeking* is not done before faith, nor without faith, but by faith. Now, if faith precedes the *seeking*, and the seeking comes before justification, then it is impossible for the sinner to seek "by faith only"—the "moment he believes." This can not be gainsaid.

5. To seek by faith is to seek as the word of the Lord directs. No one will have the boldness to deny this.

6. And finally, does it not plainly read in the New Testament, that sinners brought to believe the gospel are required to repent, confess the Saviour, and be baptized in his name for the remission of sins, calling on the name of the Lord? The conclusion of the whole matter, then, is: To be justified by faith, we must *seek* by faith; and to seek by faith, is to obey God's commands.

And now a word to our Christian friends, in conclusion. Paul says, "We walk by faith, not by sight." We must not only have faith, but we must *walk* by it. This is just equivalent to saying, that we must take the word of God for our guide, and live by it. We can not walk by faith, and go by a human creed. Faith binds us to the word of God in all matters of religion, and will not allow us to depart from it.

The Lord bless all the faithful, and bring us to enjoy the glory "ready to be revealed in the last time," when the Lord comes! AMEN.

SERMON XXIV.

THE NEW COMMANDMENT.

BY J. HARTZEL.

"A new commandment I give unto you, that ye love one another; as I have loved you, that ye also love one another. By this shall all MEN know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one to another.—JOHN xiii, 34, 35.

WAS not this commandment given before? Did not Moses command, "Thou shalt not hate thy brother in thine heart"—"Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself: I am the Lord?" And did not David say, "Behold, how good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity?" In what, then, consists the newness of the new commandment? Is it possible for one to love another more ardently than he loves himself?—to desire more good for another than for himself?—do more to promote the happiness of another than to promote his own happiness? Is this possible? Can there be a more generous, a more disinterested affection required than this, "Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself?" At first thought we would answer, no—emphatically, NO. Still there must be something new in the new commandment; if not, the Author was a mere pedant—a pretender. And the new element must command a more god-like affection than the old, "Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself." If not, the new was no better than the old.

I trust a careful analysis will show that our Lord's new commandment contains more of the essence of love and of good will to men than the old. Its rule reaches *farther*, and its standard is immeasurably higher. You

will ask, *what* then is this new feature in the new com mandment? I answer, it is this——*as I have loved you.* To love as *we* love, and to love as *Christ* loves, is the difference, and a greater can not be imagined.

For a Jew to love a brother Jew as he loved himself, was all that the law required; and this was sufficiently exacting; but the new commandment requires more—"That ye love one another, as I have loved you." This is the measure of Christian affection. This is that pure, that holy, that heavenly affection that should exist in the Christian brotherhood. This would make the church, the desire and admiration of all men.

The Lord called the attention of his disciples to this new commandment again: "This," said he, "is my commandment, that ye love one another, as I have loved you." John xv, 12. Now, Jesus Christ did not claim novelty, but originality. He first enjoined the precept as something new, but now as peculiarly his own. "This is my commandment," etc. My dear readers, observe, this is *my* commandment; thus it is not Moses' commandment. Moses commanded that ye should love one another as you love yourselves; but I command that ye love one another "as I have loved you." When a self-complaisant lawyer, a professed disciple of Moses, asked, Master, which is the great commandment of the law? the great teacher answered, "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God," etc.—"And thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself. On these two commandments hang all the law and the prophets." Our Lord claimed more for himself than he could award to the law and the prophets. He wanted his disciples to understand that he had superseded Moses; that he had not come to place a patch of new cloth upon the old garment; that his mission was to make new creatures, to give them new hearts, and to fill them with new affections; hence, the new commandment, "that ye love one another, as I have loved

you." The word *as*, both in the old and in the new, notes comparison. In the old it is self-love, and in the new it is the love of Christ. In self-love there may be much of the selfish. Moreover, the masses do not love themselves. They "forsake their own mercy;" they place a low estimate upon their own being; they do not love themselves in any saving or redeeming sense. Therefore, self-love was but an imperfect rule of action, and yet as exacting in its demands as the people under that law could bear. The love of Christ to a sinful world is a perfect affection, and this new law requires the same love in kind, in quality—"that ye love one another as I have loved you."

But let me ask, why did Jesus *the* Christ love his disciples? for he loved them before they were his disciples. Did he love them because of their worthiness? because of their lovely qualities? If such had been their inherent qualities, the love of Christ to them would not have been so needful, neither would his affection have been so meritorious. There was no personal excellence—no natural or acquired goodness in their fallen, sinful condition—that could call forth the complaisant affection of the pure and holy Redeemer. "The world loves its own;" but Jesus Christ does not love the world as the world loves itself. His is a *divine* affection. "Like as a father pitieth his children, so the Lord pitieth them that fear him; he remembereth their feeble frame; he knoweth that they are but dust." And again: "Behold what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us," etc. It was not the degree of love, but the kind of love that called forth this exclamation. The love of God to man is a father's pity. It is a compassionate affection bestowed upon helpless, hopeless weakness. This divine love ever existed, but was never embodied in the form of command until the time of my text, the utterance of the new commandment, "that ye love one another as I have loved you." Now,

and henceforth, this love became the rule of Christian affection in the kingdom of God and of Christ. "For when we were yet without strength, in due time, Christ died for the ungodly"—"in that while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us."

The new commandment should not be regarded as burdensome. If your Lord requires you to love the unworthy, and even your enemies, he only requires what he did himself. The labors of his whole life, and the shame and sufferings of his death were bestowed upon the unworthy. The new commandment is not an austere requirement, but it is infinitely benevolent, supremely for your good. Your Saviour wants to raise you out of the sensual into the spiritual; out of the human into the divine. He wants you to come and lay your cheek upon his breast, and feel the throbbings of his own great heart. Therefore, he requires you to love as he loves. This, and this only, will fill your souls with the Spirit of his beneficence and cause you to drink of the rivers of pleasure.

If his commands and motives required his disciples to love only the lovely of earth, the influence upon the subject and the object would be of no avail. Objects of delight naturally excite our admiration. Persons possessing lovely qualities excite our affections. To command love to such would be as gratuitous as to command the affectionate mother to love her babe, and equally as unmeritorious in the sight of God. "If ye love them which love you, what reward have ye?" "This is my commandment," etc.

Jesus Christ loved his disciples while they were enemies to him; and after they became his friends, their friendship was not constant. Peter once, at least, became an enemy to his Lord. Did Jesus love Peter still? Yes. He loved Peter as ardently when he said to him in the language of rebuke, "Get behind me, Satan (adversary),

thou art an offense unto me," as when he gave him the "keys of the kingdom of heaven." His affection for his disciples was as manifest in admonition as in blessing. His corrections were for their supreme good, and not for his own gratification.

His love embraced every opportunity. "What is it that ye disputed among yourselves by the way?" There was a sting in this question. "By the way they had disputed among themselves, who should be the greatest in the kingdom of heaven." They reasoned thus: The prospective kingdom will require a privy counselor, a chief judge, a treasurer, etc. Who among us shall fill these important positions in the cabinet? How keen the rebuke when he called the attention of these political aspirants to a "little child," and said, "Verily, I say unto you, except ye be converted, and become as little children, ye shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven." This was a saving word, and a word in season. At that time they were not qualified to enter the kingdom, and when they were qualified they were as free from worldly ambition as little children. So strong was the lust of political power among the disciples and their friends, in the early part of Christ's ministry, that even a woman, good old mother Zebedee, became infected by it. "Grant," she pleaded in behalf of her sons, "that they may sit, the one on thy right hand, and the other on thy left, in thy kingdom."

When the ten heard this speech they were "moved with indignation." Brethren, beware. Such have always been the effects of political rivalry. But with tenderness did the Lord deal with these erring, but ambitious disciples. He did not chide them, but he pitied them. They aspired to be great. In this there was no wrong. They were ignorant of what constituted true greatness. He knew they had false models before them. "Ye know that the princes of the Gentiles exercise dominion over them, and

they that are great exercise authority upon them. But it shall not be so among you: but whosoever will be great among you, let him be your minister," etc. "Even as the Son of man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister and give his life a ransom for many," and a ransom for you.

They did not now love one another as Christ loved them. The new commandment was not given, neither were they prepared for it. It is worthy of remark, that the new commandment, according to John, was the last commandment the Lord gave to his disciples. Indeed, none but enlightened heads and regenerated hearts can appreciate and obey this unearthly behest, and love as Christ loves.

The love of Christ for his disciples is clearly seen in the promptness with which he corrected their faults, and in the spirit in which his admonitions were imparted. In the beginning his few chosen ones were ignorant and wayward. To love such with a patient, constant affection, would require great self-denial; but the compassionate Redeemer looked at the result. The closing petition in his valedictory prayer is as follows: "And I have declared unto them thy name, and will declare it; that the love wherewith thou hast loved me may be in them, and I in them." This prayer was answered. This love was in them. Compare the time of their pupilage with their after life.

The love of Christ for his disciples was not a pusillanimous affection. Its varied manifestation was determined by the good of its object. There was a great diversity of bearing on the part of Jesus Christ toward his followers. But the end was always the same, the salvation of those he loved, as in the case of Peter. Peter had denied him thrice, and his Lord required three confessions from him. "He saith unto him the third time, Simon, son of

Jonas, lovest thou me?" Peter was grieved, and with more earnestness he said, "Lord, thou knowest all things, thou knowest that I love thee."

We have now sufficiently discussed the rudimental peculiarity of the new commandment, let us give the subject a more practical turn.

Suppose, brethren, Jesus Christ loved us only on account of our absolute perfections, how many of us would be objects of his complacent affection? Or, suppose again, the strength and constancy of his love to us would be determined by that of ours to him, how ardent and continuous would be his love toward us?

Jesus Christ loves from the absolute perfection of his own nature, rather than from the loveliness of the object. It does not hence follow that the less lovely the more beloved. There was one among the early disciples whom Jesus loved more than any other. It was that one who recorded the new commandment. He understood the Master better than any other. He was more like him in affection than any other. He wrote more about the love of God, because more under its power and inspiration, than any other. So perfectly at home was he with Jesus that he could lay his head on Jesus' breast at supper without fear. It was this one that said, "perfect love casteth out fear," and he *knew* what he said. John was that disciple, and the "disciple whom Jesus loved."

Every disciple should strive to make himself lovely, that he may call forth the more compliasant affection both from Jesus and his followers. This is a debt we owe to Jesus Christ and one another. But when we have done the best we can, it will still be true that our attainment in personal worthiness can not command the love of Jesus Christ our Lord. And it will still be true that Christ loves even the most imperfect of his erring children, because he is perfect. He loves the imperfect that they may become

perfect; the unworthy, that they may become worthy. He loves his disciples because they need his love, and because without it they must perish. To love as Christ loves, we must love from the same motives, and for the same reasons. There is virtue and utility in self-denying affection, when the passions clamor for indulgence in another direction. This we must learn if we will obey the new commandment. The duty enjoined in the new command has respect to Christians only—"that *ye* love one another." It is limited to the family. The family affection is the same in all its members. Jesus Christ belongs to the family; he is the Elder Brother. What the love of the senior brother is, the same, in quality, must be the love of all the juniors. This is called *brotherly* love, as distinguished from that love we should bear to all men. Christianity requires good to all men, but special good to the household of faith; common love to all men, but a Christ-like love to those who are Christ's. There is much said about universal love. "Love to all men" sounds harmoniously to the ear, but is not so acceptable to the heart. It is greatly to be feared that, in this world of sects and parties, of castes and colors, universal love extends but little farther than universal friendship. Nor, may it be possible farther than this, until the hearts of men have been affected by the love of Christ to a lost and degenerate world. Perhaps those only can "love all men" who are taught first to love each other for Christ's sake. No man can have a right appreciation of himself or others who does not look at humanity from Jesus Christ as his stand point. But our subject does not contemplate a common but a special love.

"Little children, yet a little while I am with you. "Whither I go, ye can not come" now, etc. "A new commandment I give unto you, that ye love one another as I have loved you." The love of Christ for his people is a self-sacrificing love. "He gave himself for the

Church." How much sacrifice will we make? There are three things most highly esteemed among men. These are honor, riches, and life. To what extent (if circumstances should require) would we be willing to sacrifice any, or all of these, for the sake of the brethren? We have some beautiful examples in point. Some of the early disciples understood the new commandment. "The Lord give mercy to the house of Onesiphorus; for he oft refreshed me, and was not ashamed of my chain; but when he was in Rome he sought me out very diligently and found me. The Lord grant unto him that he may find mercy in that day; and in how many things he ministered unto me at Ephesus, thou knowest very well." This man placed his honor, his riches, and his life in jeopardy for the sake of Paul, the prisoner. Paul and others did not "count their lives dear unto themselves." How few, even then and now, would do this? But Jesus Christ laid all his honors, his riches, and his life upon the altar of sacrifice. "He made himself of no reputation" that others might be made honorable. He made himself "poor" that others might be made "rich." He gave up his life that others might live that "eternal life" which God lives. "Was ever love like this?"

Permit me here to notice one of the most specious and most ruinous of theological errors. Perhaps there is not a more popular current fallacy than this, namely, that Christ died as a martyr, and therefore, the value of his death is, only that it is the highest proof of his integrity. The honor of martyrdom is the desire to live. But in the alternative of death or the surrender of principle, the martyr chooses the former. Hence, martyrdom is evidence of integrity.

However Stephen, Peter, or Paul might have been honored by martyrdom, it would have been a poor compliment *to Jesus the* Christ. The dogma goes upon the hypothesis

that the Man of Sorrows had no other means of establishing his divine mission, and proving the sincerity of his pretensions, but the death of the cross. If this is true, Jesus Christ submitted to death partly for his own sake. To be consistent, as a pretended teacher sent from God, he must choose death rather than falsify his pretensions.

The truth in the case is this: Jesus did not die as a martyr, neither, according to his own words, is he entitled to a martyr's glory. "I am (said he) the good shepherd; the good shepherd giveth his life for the sheep." This explains the motive of his death. Either the sheep or the shepherd had to die. The shepherd volunteered to die that the sheep might live. Again, said Jesus, "Therefore doth my Father love me, because I lay down my life that I might take it again. No man taketh it from me, but I lay it down of myself." The history of his crucifixion confirms the truth of these utterances. When every thing was accomplished, when the scripture was fulfilled, when he had suffered the last indignity, he said, "It is finished; and he bowed his head and gave up the ghost." His companions on the cross had to wait until crucifixion had done its murderous work. The soldiers found the others alive, but he was dead—"they break not his legs." The intensity of his sufferings were involuntary, but resigned—submissive; and his hasty departure was the result of his own volition. That such men as the distinguished Channing should have blundered on so plain a case, shows the danger and blinding effect of adopting a *theory* of Christianity, rather than Christianity itself. If the life of the Son of God had been wrested from him, his death could not have been a ransom for sinners. It had to be a voluntary giving up, that it might be meritorious, as respects God and his government; and reconciling, as respects the sinner.

In giving his life for sinners, Jesus did for his enemies what would fill the world with astonishment, if one would

do the same for his friends. Little did Jesus Christ receive from men but acts of indignity and ingratitude, and nothing did he return but acts of beneficence and mercy. And as he lived, so he died, praying for his enemies:—"Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do." "The love of Christ constrains us," and well it might.

The philosophy of the new commandment can not be understood and obeyed until we understand the Author. We must have correct views of what he did, and said, and suffered for us, what he is doing for us now, and what he will do for us hereafter, before we can have any intelligent appreciation of what he meant by the words, "love one another as I have loved you." Love is, in all cases, an active quality. It permeates the whole soul of the possessor. It pervades every thought, and every action, as respects the object. Jesus Christ designed that the highest order of affection should be the active, vitalising power among his disciples. Therefore, he embodied his own philanthropy in the form of a precept, and passed it into a law of his kingdom, that his own benevolence, long suffering, forbearance, forgiveness, compassion, and good spirit, might be wrought up and wrought out in all the details of Christian life, that his affection for all might pervade the hearts of all, and become the disposing, governing principle among his followers. In no way could he so certainly impart his own moral qualities to his disciples. Fine theories on the love of Christ, will never make us Christ-like in our behavior. But so soon as our desires, motives, and actions are controlled by the love of Christ—so soon the object is accomplished, the impress is made, and the "new man" is formed "after the image of him that created him."

There is infinite wisdom in the new commandment, when viewed only as a means to an end. "Now, the end of the commandment—the object of the gospel—is charity—love

—out of a pure heart, and of a good conscience, and of faith unfeigned." But love out of a pure heart takes precedence. What, then, is Christian love? It is a Christ-like affection, flowing from a pure, regenerated heart, excited, not by the loveliness of the object, but moved by its own generous impulses, sometimes compassionately, as when Jesus Christ fed the hungry multitude; or sympathetically, as when he wept with the bereaved sisters at Bethany; or complaisantly, as when he said to his disciples, "Now ye are all clean through the words which I have spoken unto you." As we have before said, sometimes the love of Christ called forth a gentle admonition, then a stern rebuke, then again a word of forgiveness, and not unfrequently the language of deep, soul-stirring commiseration. "O, Jerusalem, Jerusalem! *thou* that killest the prophets, and stonest them that are sent unto thee, how often would I have gathered thy children together, even as a hen gathereth her chickens under her wings, and ye would not! Behold, your house is left unto you desolate. For I say unto you," etc.

Reader, will this analysis assist you in understanding the new commandment in a more practical, every-day, business sense? How plain, how simple the meaning, "love one another as I have loved you!" It is but the preceptive embodiment of his own life, the practical abbreviation of himself.

In the suggestiveness of the new commandment, you can clearly see why you should love your enemies, and how you should and can love even the most unworthy of your brethren. Some things that are lost are nevertheless worth saving, provided, only, they can be found. "I came to seek and to save that which was lost." Did the loving Redeemer seek you? Did he find you? Did he save you? Do you realize this to be so? Then you will never say, I can not love that sister, I can not love that brother,

Such language indicates that you are still lost, or you do not realize the fact that you have been found.

Let us, in the next place, look at the salutary consequences that would follow the observance of the new commandment:

1. As a bond of Christian union, it supersedes the necessity of any other. Those who loved one another as Christ loves them, can not be separated. The adhesive power of this love is stronger than all other uniting influences known among men. And it is only in the absence of this affection that separation can occur. When the demon of schism began to work in the church at Corinth, this love was wanting, although this church was highly endowed with the gifts of wisdom and knowledge, of utterance and of eloquence. It was not second to any one of the apostolic churches in supernatural and spiritual gifts, and was yet, perhaps, the most corrupt church at that time. We can not here enumerate the disorders that existed among them. Suffice it to say, that Paul, in his epistles, refers them all to one cause—the absence of love. With all their "tongues," "knowledge," and "faith," they were but "sounding brass." Their carnal divisions, their going to law with one another, was not for want of knowledge, but for the want of love. "Knowledge puffeth up, but love buildeth up." The absence of the latter was the true cause of their broken down condition. And it is now the fruitful cause of denominationalism, and party strife among the professed followers of Christ.

When the present church parties shall come to love one another as Jesus Christ "loved them," they will take down their paper walls. When the cause is removed, the effect will cease, and the new commandment will be an all-sufficient bond of union, as it is the only bond of union Jesus Christ has provided.

2. When the members of the church shall love one an-

other as Christ "has loved them," there will be but few church difficulties. Where such difficulties occur almost invariably, one or both parties do not "love as" Christ loves. And the troubles will not be settled, and the parties reconciled, until they shall love one another as the new commandment directs. Not to do this, is to disobey Jesus Christ. And what else but angry, disturbing strife can be expected from the disobedient? There may be misunderstandings without contentions and heart-burnings. The parties loving one another with a Christ-like affection, will be easily entreated, the difficulty will be manageable and of short duration. I submit the truth of this doctrine to the practical test of all who may be so unfortunate as to have opportunity. Make the experiment. It may lead you to an important discovery. If the quarrel is owing to alienation of feelings, rather than injuries done, you should know it. Perhaps the knowledge of this may be your salvation.

The new commandment would greatly lessen the labors of the elders of the church. What a disagreeable responsibility do contentious brethren create for them. Do not the members of the church owe it to them to make their burden as light as possible in this respect? Not to do this is ungrateful. The means are at hand—it is the new commandment.

But it sometimes happens that the elders themselves do not love each other as Christ has loved them. Then they will be sure to get into trouble. When this is the case, the eldership, unless dissolved, will be a damage to the church. Let me call the attention of all elders and preachers to the new commandment. This will conserve the peace as well as restore the peace.

3. If the new commandment had been understood and obeyed, our country would have had no war. When the church, in colonial times, began to baptize and receive into

membership Negro slaves, she brought them within the pale of the new commandment. From that time until now, the churches on slave territory have had their slave membership. Whatever inequalities existed between the free and slave portions of the church, did not affect their equality in Christ, according to their own showing. The scripture that says, "In Christ Jesus there is neither bond nor free," was plead as an extenuating circumstance. Their discipleship to Jesus Christ was placed upon equality with all others. They were adjudged equal in the provisions of the gospel, and equally entitled to all the ordinances. If, therefore, the slave membership of the church had been beloved, as Jesus Christ loved both the master and the slave, slavery might have existed in the state, but its existence in the church would have been impossible. And the stronger probability is, that if the institution had not been sanctioned by the church, it would not have been tolerated by the state; or if it had been abolished by the church, from a sense of Christian duty to the slave—from the motives suggested in the new commandment—the institution of African slavery would not have been continued by the state.

These conclusions will scarcely admit of a peradventure. If, then, the observance of a single precept would have prevented or removed the cause of our national sin and shame, let not our afflictive war in any sense be charged upon Christianity, but to the want of that broad philanthropy inculcated by all its benignant Author did and said. Let not the attention of those who have hitherto professed the Christian religion be diverted from ourselves. Let us remember that a deep "Godly sorrow" is the most befitting. That it will be some compensation for the damage to our pure and holy profession, and most promotive of our spiritual and eternal interest.

That all these happy consequences with many others,

would have followed the observance of the new commandment as legitimately as *cause and effect*, will not be doubted.

4. There is yet another consequence to be named in the application of the subject. Application — yes, application, rather than explanation, is what we need. Explanation has lulled the religious world to sleep; application will wake it up again. To this end we must read again:

"A new commandment I give unto you, that ye love one another; as I have loved you, that ye also love one another. By this shall all *men* know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one to another."

A logician would say the connection between the two sentences just read, is as antecedent and consequent. "By this shall all *men* know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one to another." The distinguishing peculiarity of Jesus Christ, as a religious leader, is involved in this affirmation. It is the suppressed thought in the predicate. He staked something respecting himself on the new commandment, namely, that all men should know his disciples by a corresponding peculiarity, an affection hitherto unknown among men. What, now, is the fact in the case? It is briefly this. However believers and unbelievers, Trinitarians and Unitarians, sects and sectaries, differ in their opinions about Jesus of Nazareth, they all agree in this, that he was and is the very manifestation of the love of God to men. That he loved *men* as *men* did not love one another, or even as a man loves himself.

This love among his followers was to be the mark of discipleship, the basis of public recognition. So he preached to them, and so he prayed for them. "Neither pray I for these alone, but for all them also which shall believe on me through their word; that they all may be one; as thou Father art in me, and I in thee, that they also may be one

me: that the world may believe that thou hast sent me." "And that the world may know that thou hast sent me, and hast loved them as thou hast loved me."

There is a palpable connection and beautiful harmony between the new commandment and its consequent, and the prayer which soon followed. The new commandment was to lead to one result, and the prayer refers to achieve. By the well-defined love of his disciples the world was to "know" them as his. And by their oneness, as accompanied in the prayer, the world was to "believe" and "know" that the Father had "sent" him. Love and union are correlates, and both stand united in the subject as witnesses. The union of the disciples says to the world, *Jesus is the Christ*: and the love that pervades the hearts of the disciples says to the world, *these are Christ's*.

Jesus Christ and his disciples, as respects their reputation in this world, stand or fall together. Hence, by hatred and strife they can "crucify" their Lord "afresh, and put him to an open shame;" and by their love and union they can convince the world that Jesus is the "very Christ," the sent of God.

The subject should be admonitory to those who may have chosen some denominational title for themselves. Jesus Christ did not say, by this shall all *men* know that ye are my Episcopalians, my Presbyterians, my Baptists, etc., but "my disciples, if ye have love one to another." Substitute any of these and you destroy the text. You give it a partisan meaning, and the love enjoined is the love of a sect. Jesus Christ never loved a sect, neither did he ever pray for a sect. The sectarian element among the disciples should be abandoned, for the sake of Jesus Christ, for their own sakes, and for the sake of the world, *the salvation of the world*.

All men may know us by profession. Notwithstanding *our* party designations, we all claim to be followers of

Jesus Christ. This claim may be conceded. We may even abjure all party names, and cheerfully respond to the name disciple, and yet all men, the world, may not know us to be disciples in fact. The world may have heard the sinner's confession, may have witnessed our first overt act of obedience to Jesus Christ, our compliance with all the initiatives, and yet may not know us as disciples of Christ.

The word "know" has the sense of "to distinguish," "to acknowledge with due respect." As in Matt. vii, 25, "I never knew you: depart from me, ye that work iniquity." This is the same as the word "know" in the text. By this will all *men* know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one to another. Let me again state that all *men*, from the public ministry of Christ until now, agree in this, that the love of Christ for mankind was extraordinary. Infidels, and worldlings of every name and every hue, confess this. It has never been denied from Celsus until now.—Even the last mutterings of spiritualism admit this. This last new-fangled infidelity, fresh from the mint of depravity, flourishes the love of Jesus of Nazareth as with the sound of a trumpet. This is its passport to popular favor. Jesus Christ knew not only the present and the local, but also the distant and the future. He knew that after two thousand years, and to the end of time, the world would still award to him unparalleled affection for humanity. Therefore, this love, existing among his followers and made manifest by corresponding fruits, would associate them with him as his disciples. The disciples of other leaders can only love as their leaders love. Therefore, all other affections are only fraternal and clanish, mixed up with the partisan and the selfish. Sinners love sinners; publicans love publicans, and the world and worldly associations love their own. The more highly favored in the

brotherhood usually show the largest amount of brotherly love.

The love of Christ is broad as humanity, high as heaven, deep as earth. While here on earth, the weak, the oppressed, the humble, suffering poor, were the special objects of his compassionate love. For these he had bread, and for these he had words of comfort. The world knows that this was true of him, and when the world sees this in you, the world knows whose you are. This acknowledgment is not based upon church wealth, members, or orthodoxy, but on the love of the new commandment.

Without this love there is no profit in profession, and the name disciple is an unmeaning thing. Suppose all disciples of Christ should love one another as Christ has loved them. (Perhaps they do.) Then how pleasing will be his work of preaching the word of the Lord, and how remunerative in the many converts to Jesus Christ. Reader, this love is the one thing needful. We need other things to perfect our holy profession; but this we need most. This is the parent virtue, from which all other Christian excellencies proceed. This will bring you under the dominion of Jesus Christ, and the world under your power, and "all men" will report of you that you are the disciples of Christ of a truth.

As a people we have grown and are numerically strong. If "all men" knew us to be the disciples of Christ in the sense of the new commandment, what a mighty influence we would exert over "all men," and what a large return of "glory to God" and "his Christ." Let me ask, dear brethren, would it be any honor to Jesus Christ if "all men" would "know" us in any other sense than this? You will say, *no*. Jesus Christ wills that you should be favorably known by "all men." "By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one to another." It is a fact that all men, even the most unphilanthropic,

have a eulogy for love. Even the most hateful commend it, and are not insensible to its power, and see the want of it where it is not, and the blessed fruits of it where it is. To be distinguished by that which is admired by "all men" must be a desirable peculiarity. This peculiarity is attainable, and will be great progress in the right direction.

"This is my commandment, that ye love one another as I have loved you." Both the commandment and the love originated with Jesus Christ. Therefore, those who obey the commandment and possess the love are emphatically, and exclusively, Christ's disciples. His love and sympathy for them is unchanging, and will ever be the same. When the first martyr for his name suffered, he arose to his feet from the throne. Behold, said Stephen, I saw the Son of man standing on the right hand of God. When Saul whipped and persecuted the disciples, Jesus Christ received the injury as done to himself. Saul, Saul, why do you persecute me?"

All the evil and the good done to his disciples he regards as done to himself. "Inasmuch as ye have done it to one of these, the least of my brethren, ye have done *it* unto me." "Inasmuch as ye did it not to one of the least of these, ye did it not unto me."

Beware, brethren, how you speak to one another, and how you speak of one another; what you do to one another, and what you do not to one another.

"Finally, be ye all of one mind, having compassion one of another: love as brethren, be pitiful, be courteous."

SERMON XXV.

THE MINISTRY OF ANGELS.

BY J. M. MATHES.

"But to which of the angels, said he, at any time, Sit thou on my right hand until I make thine enemies thy footstool? Are they not all ministering spirits, sent forth to minister for them who shall be heirs of salvation? Heb. i, 13, 14.

The ministry of angels! What an interesting theme! How cheering the thought that angles take a deep and lively interest in the welfare of mortals! Though we see them not with our natural eyes, yet we are assured that they see us, and that they are round about us, sympathizing with us in our efforts to escape the evils of the present world, and lay hold on eternal life. An abiding conviction of these truths has had a mighty influence upon us in our pilgrimage through life. When clouds and thick darkness seemed to gather around us, and hang heavy and threatening upon our future; we have been greatly encouraged to persevere, by the reflection that God knew the integrity of our hearts, and that an innumerable company of angels were looking on, as witnesses of all our labors and sufferings, and greatly interested in our success. Praised be the name of the Lord!

In briefly discussing this subject, we propose to speak:

I. Of angels in general, and of heavenly angels in particular, and ascertain if we can, their nature and position in the great scale of being.

II. In the second place, we shall inquire into the "ministry of angels," and endeavor to show from the scriptures, in what their ministry consists.

III. And, in the third place, we shall draw arguments from all the facts and testimony in the case, in favor of Christian devotion, piety, zeal and perseverance.

1. We are first to speak of angels in general, and heavenly messengers in particular, and their position in the scale of created intelligence.

The term "angel," which occurs so frequently in both Testaments, means simply, "*messenger*"—one sent from God for the delivery of any message, good or bad, human or divine, or for the performance of any service. And hence, the name is applied to Christ, as the "Angel or Messenger of the Covenant." "Behold, I will send my Messenger, and he shall prepare the way before me: and the Lord, whom ye seek, shall suddenly come to his temple, even the Messenger of the Covenant, whom ye delight in: behold, he shall come, saith the Lord of Hosts." Mal. iii, 1. Here John the Baptist is called the messenger, or "angel," sent before, to prepare the way of the Lord. It is also applied to Christ, as the Messenger, or "Angel of the Covenant," who was suddenly to come to his temple—the second temple, which was vastly inferior to the first temple, in architectural beauty and grandeur, but which was made more glorious than the first, on account of the fact that Jesus, the Messenger of the Covenant, came to it, and graced it with his presence.

2. The term is also applied, as in the above example, to the faithful ministers of the Gospel who are sent by Christ to proclaim the glad tidings of salvation to a lost and ruined world, lying under the power of the wicked one. The seven churches of Asia Minor, were addressed by John by the divine direction, from the lonely Isle of Patmos, where he had been exiled. He addresses them through their pastors or teachers, thus: "By the angel of the church at Ephesus, write," etc.: Rev. ii, 12–18. Here the term is evidently applied to Christian teachers, by

whom written communications were sent to their respective congregations. We have followed some learned critics and translators, in rendering the first word in the above text, "by" instead of "to," or "unto," which we have no doubt is the true rendering in these references.

3. The term "angel," is also applied to such persons and agents, as God employs to execute his judgments: see Rev. xv, 8 and 16; i, 21, and hundreds of similar passages which go to confirm this position. In Heb. i, 7, winds and lightnings are represented as God's messengers, or angels. "Who maketh winds his messengers, and flaming fire his ministers." This is a quotation from Psalm civ, 4. Here David is speaking of the glory and excellent Majesty of God, and says: "Who coverest thyself with light as with a garment; who stretchest out the heavens like a curtain; who layeth the beams of his chambers in the waters; who maketh the clouds his chariots; who walketh upon the wings of the wind; who maketh his angels spirits, and his ministers a flaming fire; who laid the foundations of the earth, that it should not be removed forever." This whole connection shows that David had the winds and lightning in view, in the passage. The Greek word, "*pneuma*," used by Paul, Heb. i, 7, in making his quotation from the above psalm, may mean, "*spirit*," or it may mean "*wind*," as the context and general scope of the passage seems to require.

4. The term angel, or messenger, is also applied to evil spirits and wicked agents of the devil. "Depart from me ye cursed into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels." Matt. xxv, 41. "Know ye not that we shall judge angels?" 1 Cor. vi, 3. "Michael and his angels fought against the dragon; and the dragon fought and his angels." Rev. xii, 7.

5. But the term is generally applied to an order of beings *above* man, and *below* the divinity—heavenly mes-

sengers. To these beings the apostle doubtless refers in our text, and concerning whose ministry we are speaking. We could give a thousand proofs of this, but no one will dispute it, and, therefore, we shall not incumber the discourse with quotations upon this point, but simply refer to both Testaments for the proof.

6. Angels are not created beings, except the Lord Jesus Christ, who is uncreated divinity, but who is called an Angel or Messenger, simply because he was sent of the Father, with the covenant of peace to man—the bearer of glad tidings of great joy to the world. That heavenly messengers are *created* beings, we need not spend much time in attempting to prove, as all admit it; yet we will offer a proof or two.

"What is man, that thou art mindful of him? and the son of man, that thou visitest him? For thou hast made him a little lower than the angels, and hast crowned him with glory and honor," etc. Ps. viii, 4, 5. This text is quoted by Paul in his letter to the Hebrews, chapter 2. "Thou madest him a little lower than the angels," may be read thus:—"Thou madest him a little lower than thou madest angels." And if this is admissible, the proposition is already established. But take another example:

"And when I had heard and seen, I fell down to worship before the feet of the angel who showed me these things. Then saith he unto me, See thou do it not; for I am thy fellow-servant, and of thy brethren the prophets, and of them who keep the sayings of this book; worship God." Rev. xxii, 8, 9.

Now, if this angel had been an uncreated divine being, it would have been no wrong for John to have worshiped him. But the very fact that the angel forbid it—"see thou do it not"—is sufficient evidence that he was a created being, to worship whom would have been wrong. But further, it is clearly stated by this angel that he was a

created being, when he said to John, "I am thy fellow-servant, and of thy brethren the prophets." But we need not elaborate this point any further, as all, we presume, are agreed about it.

7. Angels occupy a very important and honorable position in the creation of God; standing, as they do, at the head of all created intelligences, as far as we know, they are far below the divinity, as they were created. But they are a *little above* man, and not subject to death, as mortals are. They stand near the throne of God, and are the swift messengers of the Almighty will, who fly with the speed of lightning to perform the ministry upon which they are sent. They form a part of God's great family, and consequently are our brethren. They sympathize with us as their weak and erring brethren.

But among the heavenly messengers, or angels, there are *orders*. Stephen, the first Christian martyr, said to the Jews, in his defense: "Who have received the law by the disposition of angels, and have not kept it." Acts vii, 53. We believe that the learned all agree, that the above declaration of Stephen should be rendered thus: "Who have received the law through the *rank* of angels." The inspired Stephen's idea of these angels, seems to have been about this: The angels of God are ranged in beautiful and shining bands, ranks, or orders; and that when God gave the law to Israel, at Mount Sinai, he first gave it to that rank or order nearest to his throne, and from that order it was handed over to the next, until it passed down through the shining ranks of angels to Moses, on the awful Mount of God. And this idea of ranks, or orders, is fully sustained by those scriptures which speak of "angels and archangels, cherubim and seraphim," etc., the symbols of whose existence we find in the Jewish temple and tabernacle. But all these shining and glorious orders of angels *are in* perfect union with each other, and in complete sub-

ordination to the Son of God, who is the Lord, both of angels and men. "For when he bringeth again his first begotten into the world, he saith, And let all the angels of God worship him." Gabriel, Michael, and Raphael must bow before him, and acknowledge his divine superiority. "Wherefore, God hath highly exalted him, and hath given him a name which is above every name; that at the name of Jesus, every knee should bow, of things in heaven and things in earth, and things under the earth," etc.

That angelic nature is not the *divine* nature, or *human* nature, is evident from the following declaration of Paul: "For verily, he took not on him the *nature* of angels, but the seed of Abraham," etc. Christ did not put on the angelic nature, therefore the nature of angels is not the divine nature; but Jesus clothed himself in our own human nature, that he might be a merciful high priest in things pertaining to God.

II. In what does the ministry of angels consist?

1. Under both Testaments, angels have rendered important services for the people of God—warning them of danger, and delivering them from it, and in many other ways serving them. Out of a thousand examples and more, we shall select only a few. Two angels came to Sodom and warned Lot of his danger, and directed his escape, and then destroyed Sodom and Gomorrah with fire and brimstone. See Gen. 19th chapter. An angel went before Abraham's servant when he went to Messopotamia, to obtain a bride for his master Isaac. Gen. xxiv, 7. The angel of the Lord went before the camp of Israel in a pillar of the cloud. Ex. xiv, 19. The angel of the Lord went down with Daniel into the lions' den, and shut their mouths, so that they hurt not the man of God. Dan. vi, 22. An angel of God walked with Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, in the midst of the fiery furnace of king Nebuchadnezzar. and delivered them from the devouring element.

Dan. iii, 28. David says, "The angels of the Lord encampeth round about them that fear him, to deliver them." Ps. xxxiv, 7. Again, the psalmist describes the ascension of the great Messiah, to the throne of the universe. He says:

"The chariots of God are twenty thousand, even thousands of angels; the Lord is among them, as in Sinai of old, in the holy place. Thou hast ascended on high; thou hast led captivity captive; thou hast received gifts for men, yea, for the rebellious also, that the Lord God might dwell among them." Ps. lxvi, 17, 18.

The angel Gabriel declared to Mary that she should be the mother of the holy child Jesus. Luke i, 13–20. An angel also announced the birth of Christ to the shepherds in the field. "Fear not; behold we bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people, for to you is born this day in the city of David, a Saviour who is Christ the Lord." Luke ii, 10, 11. And an innumerable company of the heavenly host appeared on that important occasion, and they said, "Glory to God in the highest, peace on earth, and good will to men." Speaking of the interest felt by the heavenly messengers on the occasion of the birth of Christ, the poet says:

"The theme, the song, the joy was new
To each angelic tongue;
Swift through the realms of light it flew,
And loud the echo rung.
Down through the portals of the sky,
The feeling anthem ran,
And angels flew with eager joy,
To bear the news to man."

While Christ prayed in the lonesome garden of Gethsemane, just before he suffered, until his sweat began, as great drops of blood, falling to the ground, "There appeared an angel unto him from heaven, strengthening him."

Luke xxii, 43. An angel rolled away the stone from the door of the supulcher, on the morning of the resurrection of Christ. An angel declared the resurrection of Christ to the two Marys, and told them where they could see the Lord. An angel delivered Peter from prison, and opened the great iron gate for him, and let him out into the high way. The angels of God encamped round about the prophet Elisha, when he was in danger from the Syrians. They had horses and chariots of fire, or resembling fire. 2 Kings vi, 17. The Syrians besieged Samaria, and threw the city into very great distress; but the angel smote the besieging host, and made them hear a noise like the sound of chariots, and horses, and great hosts, and in their panic they arose and fled, and left their tents, and provisions, and goods as they were, and thus Israel was delivered from the horrors of famine and death. 2 Kings 7th chapter. Let these examples suffice.

2. The ministry of angels consists, in part, in executing God's judgments. We shall only select a few examples under this head. An angel destroyed the first-born of the Egyptians, while he passed over the houses of the Israelites, where the blood of sprinkling was found. Ex. xii, 23. Two angels, as quoted before, executed the judgments of God upon the cities of the plain. An angel was sent to execute the judgment of God upon David and Israel, for his sin in numbering Israel. 1 Chron. xxi, 15, 16.

And in the book of Revelations the judgments of God there denounced against the wicked—such as the sounding of the seven trumpets; pouring out of the seven vials of his wrath; reaping the harvest of the earth; binding the tares in bundles to be burned (Matt. 13th chapter); gathering the vintage and casting the grapes into the wine-press of God, indicative of the dreadful scenes of human woe, that will characterize the closing up of the present dispensation, when the physical judgment of God will

overturn and put down all foes to the government of Christ; all of which will be under the ministry of angels.

3. The people generally are apt to think and speak of angels as having their habitation far away from the abode of mortals, and as taking but little, if any, interest in the affairs of men. But so far from this being true, these superhuman beings feel a lively interest in the affairs of this life, and especially in everything pertaining to the people of God. These heavenly messengers are around us, and continually near to us. Paul says, "But ye are come to Mount Sion, and unto the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, and to an innumerable company of angels," etc. Heb. xii, 22. He does not say, "*ye will hereafter come*," but "*ye are come*," or "*have come*." Well, then, we are with them, though we see them not. They see us, and are sent forth to minister for the heirs of salvation. Eld. Alexander Campbell, in a discourse on demonology, of great power, gives us to understand that angels minister to Christians in warding off danger, and driving back demons and evil spirits, who are under the control of the prince of the power of the air. This part of their ministry for us, we do not see with the natural eye, and therefore we are not at present prepared fully to appreciate it in all its great importance. But if our eyes were opened, as the young man with the prophet Elisha had his opened, we should no doubt see, as he saw, a multitude of angels encamped round about us, with horses and chariots resembling fire. Indeed, we judge, that if we could behold the living reality, we should ever after feel safe under the kind protection and guardian care of the strong and mighty angels, who are more for us, than all they who can be against us.

4. Angels are deeply concerned for the salvation of sinners. Jesus says, "I say unto you, that likewise joy shall be in heaven over one sinner that repenteth, more

tnan over ninety and nine just persons who need no repentance." Luke xv, 7. "Likewise, I say unto you, there is joy in the presence of the angels of God, over one sinner that repenteth." v, 10.

From all of which we learn, that angels are constant observers of the passing events of this world, and that when the believing penitent sinner, with a contrite heart and flowing tears, comes forward to confess the Saviour, angels witness the interesting scene, and when with the mouth confession is made unto salvation, angels hasten away with the glad tidings to heaven, and spread joy among all the glorious orders of angels in the presence of God.

Sinner, how can you refuse to come? The Saviour has died for you, and during all your life, God has pursued you with his loving kindness and tender mercies. You have heard the gospel till you understand the terms of salvation. Will you not, then, at once set yourself right before God and the intelligent universe? Angels are waiting to bear the joyful news to heaven. Come along, then, without delay, and honor yourself by honoring the Saviour, while it is called to-day!

5. Angels minister to Christians at death. The Saviour says: "And it came to pass that the beggar died, and was carried by the angels into Abraham's bosom." If the angels performed this ministry to a pious Lazarus, we conclude that they do the same for all the heirs of salvation at death. How cheering the thought, my dear Christian friends, that when the physician can do no more for us, and all our dear earthly friends must stop from their inability to go further, or do more for us; then the angels step in and tender us their kind offices; and as our ears become dull to the voice of earthly friendship, they are opened to the songs of angels, and the music of heaven. And as our eyes closes upon the scenes of time, we have

our spiritual vision opened upon the undying glories of the spiritual world! And, thank God, when our spirit is set free from this tenement of clay, it will not be doomed to wander in darkness, or go alone in search of the Paradise of God, but the angels of God wait around the bed of the dying Christian, ready to bear his happy spirit home.

"Bright angels are from glory come,
They 're round my bed, they 're in my room,
They wait to bear my spirit home.
All is well, all is well!"

Such reflections and truths as these are well calculated to remove the terrors of the grim monster death, and to give us deep and abiding consolation as we pass through the dark valley and shadow of death. We shall not have to take the journey alone; for not only will we have the company of angels, but Jesus, the Lord, will be with us also in that trying moment. He has conquered death, and him that had the power of death, and rose a mighty conqueror upon immortality's side of the tomb; and, therefore, we have the utmost confidence in his power to save, and his ability to guide us through the dark shades of the tomb, to glory immortal beyond the grave.

"No clouds those blissful regions know,
For ever bright and fair,
For sin, the cause of every woe,
Can never enter there.

5. But angels will also minister for us at the second coming of Christ.

"And then shall appear the sign of the Son of Man in the heavens; and then shall all the tribes of the earth mourn, and they shall see the Son of Man coming in the clouds of heaven, with power and great glory. And he shall send his angels with a great sound of a trumpet, and they shall gather together his elect from the four winds,

from one end of heaven to the other." Matt. xxiv, 31, 32. And Paul says: "For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trumpet of God; and the dead in Christ shall rise first." 1 Thess. iv, 16. Again, the Saviour says, in his parable of the "tares of the field:" "The harvest is the end of the world, and the reapers are the angels," and that in "the time of harvest I will say to the reapers, gather ye together, first the tares, and bind them in bundles to burn them; but gather the wheat into my barn." Matt., thirteenth chap.

And when the angelic reapers shall have shouted the harvest home, the wicked shall be cast into darkness, and then shall the righteous shine forth as the sun, in the kingdom of their Father, and shall go no more out. O! may we all be ready for the great harvest, that we may be gathered with all the redeemed, around the Son of God, through the ministry of kind angels.

III. Under our third head, we are to draw arguments and conclusions, from the foregoing facts and testimony, in favor of piety, and greater devotion to the service of the blessed Master.

1. Our first argument, under this head, is drawn from the relationship we sustain to the angels of God. Dear Christian brethren and sisters: how important that we bear in mind the great truth, that we are adopted into the family of God, a part of which is in heaven, and a part on earth. Paul says: "Of whom the whole family in heaven and earth is named." Then God has one family, and angels are the elder branch of the family; and since our adoption, they have become our kindred — our elder brethren. How careful, then, we ought to be, to maintain the dignity of our profession, and the honor of the Christian name; and that we should live worthy of our kindred, and of our high and honorable position in God's great

family. With this truth constantly before our mind, how could we ever stoop to any thing that would disgrace us in the eyes of angels! And when Paul would impress upon Christian women the propriety of covering their heads when they pray in the worshiping assemblies, he says:

"For a man ought not to vail his head, because he is the image and glory of God; but the woman is the glory of the man. For the man is not of the woman, but the woman of the man: for the man was not created for the woman, but the woman for the man. For this reason ought the woman to have a token of subjection on her head, on account of the angels." 1 Cor. xi, 7–10. The presence of the angels in the worshiping assemblies, should impress upon pious women, and all others, the propriety of decorum, and proper conduct in the house of the Lord. "*Because of the angels*"—that is, because the angels are present, and will note every impropriety is dress, in attitude, in language, and in general deportment.

2. Another argument we draw from the fact, that angels are superhuman beings, and above us in the scale of created intelligence, yet they condescend to take a lively interest in us, and are willing to receive us into the family of God, as brethren, and even rejoice over our adoption. Surely no intelligent Christian, who duly considers this fact, will fail to receive new encouragement to perseverance and a holy life. Shall the glorious and shining ranks of angels manifest so much concern for our salvation, present and eternal, and we not be greatly encouraged to "give all diligence to make our calling and election sure?"

3. From the fact, also, that "they are all ministering spirits, sent forth to minister for the heirs of salvation," we would argue the importance of "laying aside every weight, and the sin which doth so easily beset us, and running the race that is set before us, with patience." The

prize before us, to be won, is a "crown of life." What sacrifice is too great for us to make, in order to obtain it? And since angels minister for us, and all the good and happy spirits, in heaven and on earth, are on our side, and would encourage us to hold on our way, shall we not double our diligence to make sure of the crown?

4. From the fact, also, that we "have come to an innumerable company of angels," all of whom are sent forth to minister for the heirs of salvation, and who constitute a large and noble class of witnesses, who behold the race in which Christians are running from earth to heaven: "Let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which doth so easily beset us; and let us run with patience the race set before us; looking unto Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith; who for the joy that was set before him, endured the cross, despising the shame, and is forever set down at the right hand of the majesty on high." Heb., twelfth chap.

God, our heavenly Father, has his eye upon us continually. "Thou God seest me," should never be forgotten by us. Jesus Christ, the Mediator of the New and better Covenant, is also a constant beholder of our actions, whether performed in secret, or before our fellow-men. An innumerable company of angels are also round about us continually, surveying our conduct and deportment, with deep solicitude and anxiety. The spirits of just men made perfect, and whose "faith is turned to sight," also, behold us, and take a deep interest in our efforts to win the prize, and lay hold upon immortality. The good and pious of earth are also looking on with religious concern, and would constantly encourage us to persevere in well-doing.

The eyes of the world are upon us: "For the grace of God, that bringeth salvation, hath appeared to all men." They all know what the religion of the Saviour requires of

all those who embrace it, and consequently they are able to mark all our faults against us. And our influence for good over them is lessened in the ratio of our short comings, and want of conformity to the law of the Lord.

The devil and his angels are watching us also, and seeking every opportunity to deceive us, and draw us away from the good and the right way. Since then we are running the Christian race, in the presence of the inhabitants of three worlds, "what manner of persons ought we to be, in all holy conversation and godliness." Surely no Christian could condescend to perform a low and mean action; and especially when we reflect that our heavenly Father, our Lord Jesus Christ, the innumerable company of angels, and the spirits of just men made perfect, are all witnesses of the race we are running, upon the Mount Zion.

5. And finally, all the holy angels will come with Jesus when he comes to be glorified in his saints, and admired by all them that believe: and consequently, when we stand before the Judge of the living and dead, we shall also stand in the immediate presence of all the holy angels, who have been our ministering spirits in earth's pilgrimage. With what joy will they hear pronounced upon us, by the eternal Judge: "Well done, good and faithful servant." Or, if we have neglected the great salvation, we shall be compelled to hear the Judge pronounce the awful sentence, "*depart*," and the angels will hear the sentence, and approve it as just.

Ought we not, then, to put forth every effort in our power to be prepared, and well prepared, for the mighty scenes of the last and great day?—when the deep-toned sound of the trumpet of God shall wake us up from the slumbers of the tomb, and call us away in a moment to stand before the judgment seat of Christ! If, in that tremendous hour, we shall be conscious of having neglected

the calls of mercy, or of having sold our birthright to heaven for the vain things of time, and the pleasures of sin, what shame and confusion of face will cover us, when we thus stand in the presence of Him who died for us, and whose mercies we have slighted; and in the presence of all the holy angels, before whom we have sinned while living in the world; and in the presence of all the good and intelligent beings of the universe, congregated on this solemn occasion! Neither tongue nor pen can describe the bitter anguish, and deep shame and remorse that will seize upon the guilty slighter of the gospel of the grace of God.

But who shall describe the joys of that happy hour, when Christ shall say to those who have loved and served him on earth, "Come in, you blessed of my Father—inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world!" And "God is not ashamed to be called their God, for he hath prepared for them a city." There, in the presence of all the holy angels, we shall "enter in through the gates into the city," where we shall receive the glorious crown of life, and be permitted to handle the golden harps, and join in giving praise, and honor, and glory, majesty and power, to him who sits upon the throne and to the Lamb. The joys of the redeemed, like a deep and mighty river, shall flow on to all eternity. And the sound of their rejoicing and praise, shall go up "like the sound of many waters, and like the sound of mighty thundering, saying, hallelujah!" O, then, my brethren and sisters, let us seek to enter into that rest, and glory, and joy, which shall continue forever and ever!

Reader, are you a disobedient sinner? Will you not at once lay down your puny weapons of rebellion against your rightful Lord and King, and sue for pardon, while mercy may be obtained? "With the heart man believeth unto righteousness, and with the mouth confession is made

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unto salvation." O, then, if you believe the gospel with all your heart, make the "good confession" with your mouth, that Jesus may "confess you before his Father and the holy angels"—and that through your obedience to Christ you may be received into the family of God, and become an heir of salvation, and enjoy the ministry of angels, and finally stand confessed before God, angels and men, as a child of God. "Come, then, for all things are now ready." "Now is the accepted time, and behold now is the day of salvation."

May God, in his infinite mercy, incline you all to come to Christ, and finally save us all with an everlasting salvation is our prayer. *Amen!*

SERMON XXVI.

ALLEGORY OF THE TWO WOMEN.

BY J. M. MATHES.

GALATIANS IV, 22–31.

To understand this allegory, it will be necessary to make some general remarks upon the whole passage, and the context generally. And, 1st, the Galatia of the New Testament was one of the political divisions of Asia Minor, and perhaps the most important one. In this letter the apostle represents the Galatians, as all profane history does, as a people susceptible of quick impressions and very sudden changes, with a fickleness only equal to their courage and enthusiasm; and a constant liability to that disunion which was the result of their excessive vanity. They were a peculiar race, from whom has sprung one of the most powerful nations of modern times.

Long before the Christian era, they wandered forth from their European home, burnt Rome, pillaged Delphi, and founded an empire in Northern Italy, and another in Asia Minor, of great importance. The "Galatia" of the New Testament was really the "GAUL" of the east, and the Epistle to the Galatians, would more literally be entitled, "the epistle to the Gauls." And when the Greek historians speak of the inhabitants of ancient France, they use the name "Galatians." The terms Gauls and Galatians are simply the Latin and Greek forms of the same barbarian appellation. When the Galatians were once established in Asia Minor, they lost no time in spreading themselves over the whole peninsula, with their arms and

devastations. But their territory and power were gradually curtailed, and they were reduced to the central district, known in the times of Paul as Galatia, surrounded by the other states or provinces of Asia Minor. The modern French people are the decendants of these ancient Gallatians, or Gauls.

Paul, on his second missionary tour from Antioch, in company with Silas and Timothy, having passed through Iconium, Lystra, and Derbe, confirming the souls of the disciples, passed over into the "regions of Galatia." His reception there may be inferred from his letter to them, where he says, "And my temptation, which was in my flesh, you despised not, nor rejected, but received me as an angel of God, even as Christ Jesus." Chapter iv, 14. These fickle-minded Galatians, were, however, soon seduced from the faith of the gospel, after the departure of the apostle from among them, by time-serving teachers, who opposed and perverted the gospel of Christ. The doctrine of these Judaizers, concerning the necessity of circumcision in order to salvation, the apostle terms "another gospel," or rather no gospel at all.

In order to lessen the influence of Paul among the people, the Judaizers charged that he was no apostle, or at least that he was only an apostle of men, having received his commission to preach the gospel, not from God, but from the brethren at Antioch; and that he had learned all he knew about the gospel from the apostles at Jerusalem. These false accusations were listened to by many, which led the apostle to rebuke them sharply. He says, "O, foolish Galatians! who hath deceived you, that you should not obey the truth?"

And to refute these false charges, he narrates his journeys and labors after his conversion, and refers to his interviews with the other apostles, and then declares that he "did not go up to Jerusalem to those who were apostles

before him," to learn the gospel, but that he had received it by revelation from God the Father, and that he had successfully preached it for several years, before he saw any of the other apostles.

In the third chapter the apostle proves that the promise of God to Abraham, concerning Christ, was not disannulled or set aside by the law, which was established four hundred and thirty years after the promise. That the inheritance bestowed upon Abraham that he should be the heir of a world, was to be enjoyed through the fulfillment of the promise, and not by law, and consequently the Jewish nation did not receive nor enjoy the promised inheritance by the law. The reasons that the promise or covenant made with Abraham could not be disannuled by any subsequent arrangement, God was one of the high contracting parties, and Abraham was the other, when the covenant was made concerning Christ. But when the law was given at Mount Sinai, Abraham was not present, and therefore, though it was but a man's covenant, yet, without his consent, no one could change it or set it aside. As Abraham was not present to give his consent, the covenant could not be disanulled by any thing that was done at Mount Sinai.

The Judaizer would then very naturally ask the question, "Wherefore, then, serveth the law?" Of what account is the law, if it does not supersede the promise, nor put us in possession of the inheritance, which Paul declared was not enjoyed by the law, but by the promise? Paul answers, "It was added on account of transgression (till the offspring should come, to whom the promise was made), having been appointed through the service of angels, in the hand of a Mediator." That is, the law was added to the promise four hundred and thirty years after the promise was confirmed to Abraham. Why was it added? "Because of transgression." How long shall it continue in

force? "Until the seed, or offspring, shall come, to whom the promise was made." And he assures us that the seed or offspring to whom the promise was made, was Jesus Christ.

He then declares that the law could not give life, but that God has concluded all under sin; all under the law, as well as those who have not the law, so "that the promise by faith in Jesus Christ may be given to those who believe," whether Jew or Gentile. And he declares that, so far as the Jews were concerned, "the law was our pedagogue that led us to Christ, that we might be justified by faith." But the Jew would ask, then, "Are we still under this pedagogue?" The apostle says, "But since faith has come [Christ the promised seed] we are no longer under a pedagogue."

The question would arise in the mind of the Jew, as it does in the mind of many sectarianized Gentiles: If the law could not give us life, or put us in possession of the inheritance; but merely act the part of a pedagogue to lead us to Christ, who you say has now come; then, who are the heirs of this valuable inheritance, which you teach that God gives, not by law, but through the Gospel? Are all the sons of Abraham made heirs unconditionally? The apostles answers:

"For ye are all the children of God, by faith in Christ Jesus; for as many of you, as have been immersed into Christ, have put on Christ. There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither bondman nor freeman, there is neither male nor female; for you are all one in Christ Jesus. And if you are Christ's, then you are Abraham's children, and heirs according to the promise."

Neither all the Jews, nor all the Gentiles, are heirs of the inheritance with Abraham; but only such as have become the children of God by faith in Christ, and have put on Christ, by being immersed in his name. All such, are

heirs of the inheritance according to the promise made to Abraham. Believers, under the law, and others who had believed from the beginning, are represented by the apostle, at the beginning of the fourth chapter, as minors, under guardians and managers till the time appointed by the Father. But when the fullness of time came, God sent forth his Son, born of a woman, born under the law, that he might buy off those who were under the law, that we might receive the adoption. And because you are sons, God has sent forth the Spirit of his Son into your hearts, crying "Abba, Father."

At the eighth verse, he speaks of the condition of the Gentiles: "But, then, because you knew not God, you were enslaved to those who, by nature, are not Gods; now, however, after having known God, rather, indeed having been known by God, how is it that you are turning back to the weak and beggarly rudiments to which you desire again to be in bondage, as at first?" At the seventeenth verse, he refers to these Judaizing teachers, and their reasons for trying to lead these Galatians astray, he says: "They are ardently attached to you, but, not honorably; indeed, they desire to exclude us, that you may be ardently attached to them." Then, to illustrate and bring fully to view the condition of those still under the bondage of the law, as contrasted with those made free by the Gospel, he introduces the allegory of the bondmaid, and the freewoman. We give the allegory, from Anderson's translation of the passage, as follows:

"Tell me, you that desire to be under the law, do you not understand the law? For it is written, that Abraham had two sons; one by a bondmaid, and one by a freewoman. But the one by the bondmaid was born according to the flesh; the other, by the freewoman, was by promise. These things are allegorized: for these women are the two covenants; the one from the Mount Sinai, that brings

forth for bondage, which is Hager. For Hager represents Mount Sinai, in Arabia, and corresponds to the present Jerusalem, for she is in bondage with her children. But Jerusalem, which is above, is free; and she is the mother of us all. For it is written: Rejoice you barren, that do not bear; break forth and cry aloud, you that travail not; for many more are the children of the deserted, than of her that had the husband of the deserted. We, indeed, brethren, like Isaac, are children of promise. But, as then, he that was born according to the flesh, persecuted him that was born according to the spirit, so even now. But what says the scripture? Cast out the bondwoman and her son; for the son of the bondwoman shall not be heir with the son of the freewoman. Therefore, brethren, we are not children of the bondwoman, but of the freewoman." Gal. iv, 21–31.

As to the design of this allegory, or parable, we think there can be no doubt. But we shall discuss the main features of the allegory, very briefly, and in doing so, we shall speak—

I. Of the bondmaid and her children; and,

II. Of the freewoman and her children; and,

III. The advantages of being children of the freewoman, as compared with the bondage of those who are born after the flesh—children of the bondmaid.

An allegory is properly, when persons and events present, or near at hand, with their qualities and circumstances, being understood, are considered as types or representatives of persons and events more remote, to which they have a resemblance. "Wherefore, since the apostle Paul tells us, that what Moses has written concerning the two women, Sarah and Hagar, though a literal history of the two women, is an allegorical representation of the two covenants; and that Abraham's sons by the women, represent the persons born under the two covenants, to-

gether with the treatment they are to receive from God; we can run no risk in so using the history. And especially as the prophet Isaiah gives the same representation of these women and their children, in the fifty-fourth chapter. He says, verse 1st: "Sing, O barren, thou that didst not bear: For more are the children of the desolate than the children of the married wife."

I. Hagar was the bondmaid of Sarah, the lawful wife of Abraham. But, as Sarah was barren, she gave her Egyptian bondmaid to Abraham, that by her, as a kind of substitute, she might have children; and Hagar had a son by Father Abraham, and called his name Ishmael. And she was afterward cast out with her son, from heiring with Isaac the large estate of Abraham. Hagar, was also one of the names given to Mount Sinai, by the Arabians, as the name signifies in their language, a rock; it was very properly applied to the whole mountain range in Arabia Petrea, of which Mount Sinai is a part.

Hagar, being the name of Mount Sinai, where the Jewish nation received their law, and being a bondmaid, and bringing forth her son Ishmael to bondage, as the status of the child follows the condition of the mother; and as her son was not born according to the Spirit, but according to the flesh, that is, simply by ordinary generation, she is, therefore, with her son, a fit representation of the covenant given at Mount Sinai—which describes the condition of the present Jerusalem, which, like Hagar, is in bondage with her children.

The apostle certainly intends to teach us, that the Jews are the children of Hagar the bondmaid, because, like her son Ishmael, they were descended from Abraham according to the flesh, and like Ishmael, had no title to the inheritance by their fleshly descent from Abraham. The Israelites became members of the Jewish church, because they were descended from Abraham according to the flesh. They

are not born after the Spirit, but of the flesh; and being born under the institution of the law, were not only in bondage, but not entitled to the inheritance, which is enjoyed entirely upon the ground of faith and obedience. All, therefore, who are members of the church by virtue of a natural birth, or fleshly relation, are the children of Hagar, and are in bondage, and not entitled to heir with the children of the freewoman.

II. The freewoman and her children represent the new covenant, and all those born under it. Sarah was the freewoman and Abraham's lawful wife. Yet she is called the *deserted* by the prophet; when Abraham took the Egyptian handmaid, by the advice and consent of his wife Sarah. Her son Isaac was born after the Spirit, as he was the child of promise. But Hagar and Ishmael persecuted Sarah and Isaac. So the present Jerusalem and her children persecute those who are born after the Spirit—the Christians.

But Sarah, the freewoman, represents the Jerusalem which is above, and which is the mother of all Christians. The Jerusalem which is above, is simply the Church of God under the new covenant. It is above, and all her children are free, as the child follows the condition of the mother. As to the multitude of the children of Sarah, the *deserted*, as compared to the children of Hagar, who had taken Sarah's husband, it is to be understood of Abraham's spiritual seed. The apostle says, Rom. ix, 8: "The children of the flesh, these are not the children of God; but the children of the promise are counted for seed." In this light the expressions in scripture, concerning believers being begotten of God and of the Spirit, are allusions to the supernatural begetting of Isaac, and to what was typified thereby. For example: "To as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons *of God*, who were begotten, not of blood, nor of the will

of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God." John i, 12. Again, "Except a man be born of water, and of the Spirit, he can not enter into the kingdom of God." John iii, 5, 6.

In Genesis xxi, 9, we have an account of the persecution of Isaac by Ishmael, referred to in this Allegory. It consisted in his mocking at the feast of his weaning. We are not specially informed as to what words he used in mocking and persecuting Isaac, but it is very probable that the following was about the true state of the case, viz.:

Ishmael was born in the year of the world 2094, and Isaac was not born till the year 2108, or fourteen years afterward. Ishmael and his mother Hagar, had, during that fourteen years, looked upon Ishmael as the sole heir to Abraham's vast estate; but when they saw the little stranger Isaac, the son of Sarah, they saw in a moment all their hopes dashed to the ground. He became envious and abusive of his younger brother. Finally, Sarah became so much displeased with Ishmael and his mother, that she prevailed upon Abraham to send them away, and he expelled them from his premises. Hagar and Ishmael wandered in the wilderness of Beersheba, and when reduced to great distress and want, a voice from heaven said, "Fear not, Hagar, the Lord hath heard the child's voice. I will make him the father of a great people." They abode in the wilderness of Paran, where Ishmael became expert in archery, and his mother married him to an Egyptian woman.

Now, there is a striking resemblance in this; Ishmael, born after the flesh, was scornful, and hated his younger brother Isaac, who was born after the Spirit, and persecuted him, until he was expelled from the family of Abraham. So the Jews, who were born after the flesh, like Ishmael, persecuted the Christians. Like Ishmael, for a long time they looked upon themselves as the sole heirs

to the kingdom of heaven, and the only children of Abraham; and when they saw the great Messiah, and especially when they saw his kingdom established on earth, and the people flocking to his standard, they were filled with bitter hatred and envy against Christ and his disciples, and persecuted them "even unto strange cities." They followed this wicked course until it became necessary that they should be expelled from the land and ancient home of Abraham, like Hagar and Ishmael, their great prototypes. This was consummated when Jerusalem was taken by the Romans.

III. The advantages of being children of the freewoman, as compared with the bondage of those who are born after the flesh—children of the bondmaid.

All Christians are children of the freewoman, and of course are themselves free. The Saviour says, "If you continue in my word, then you shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free." Again—"And if the Son make you free, you shall be free indeed." To be made free by the Son, and through the truth, is to be pardoned, and adopted into the heavenly family, and constituted a child of Abraham, and an heir according to the promise. And Paul describes this conversion very beautifully in the following scripture, viz.:

"For ye are all the sons of God through faith in Christ Jesus; for as many of you as have been immersed into Christ, have put on Christ. In Christ Jesus there is neither Jew nor Greek; there is neither bondman nor freeman; there is neither male nor female; for you are all one in Christ Jesus. And if you be Christ's, then you are Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise." Gal. iii, 26–29.

According to this testimony, then, no one is a child of Abraham, and an heir according to the promise, except by faith in Christ, and obedience to the Gospel. The Gospel

is the "law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus," by which Paul declares that we are "made free from the law of sin and death." None, then, belong to Abraham's spiritual family, but those who believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, with all the heart, repent of their sins and obey from the heart the form of doctrine delivered them, by being buried with the Lord in baptism—planted together in the likeness of his death. All such are born again—born of water and of the Spirit—born after the Spirit, and according to the promise, as Isaac was. And then, all such are made free from sins, and children of the freewoman, or members of the church of the living God, which is the pillar and support of the truth.

But the Hagarines, are those who claim to be children of Sarah—or of Jerusalem—which is above, free, and the mother of all Christians, upon the ground of mere fleshly relations. This embraces a very large class of professors of religion of the present day, as well as of past ages. Take, for example, all the descendants of Abraham, according to the flesh, who claim all the blessings promised to Abraham, by virtue of the fleshly relation. Wherever they are found, in all our great commercial centers, and marts of trade and business, they are the same haughty, persecuting people. Though like their prototype Ishmael, they have been cast out for nearly eighteen centuries, still they maintain all their ancient hatred to Christ and to his disciples—those born after the Spirit.

But we are laboring under a great mistake, if we suppose that the Israelites, according to the flesh, are the only children of Hagar we have among us. And we mean nothing meanly offensive, when we say that all national churches, as the Greek church of Russia, the Latin church of Rome — generally called "Roman Catholic" — the church of England, of which Queen Victoria is the present head, and all the pedobaptist churches in the old world

SERMON XXVII.

CREEDS.

BY REV. CHARLES BEECHER.

[THE following sermon was originally delivered at the dedication of the second Presbyterian house of worship in Fort Wayne, Indiana, February 22, 1846, by Charles Beecher, the Pastor. The Creed question is treated with so much fairness and ability, that we have concluded to preserve this sermon, by giving it a place in the Western Preacher. The preacher, was a Presbyterian minister at the time, and continues to be, so far as we know. And being a member of the Beecher family, son of Lyman Beecher, and brother of Henry Ward Beecher, and Mrs. Harriet B. Stowe, we presume this sermon will be read with interest by all.]—EDITOR.

PART I

On occasions like the present, when societies have met for the purpose of consecrating an edifice to the worship of God, it has been generally deemed appropriate to exhibit some of the leading views by which such societies propose to be governed.

The custom is peculiarly appropriate to our present circumstances. There may have existed, in some minds, a degree of uncertainty as to the complexion of our sentiments, as well as our ultimate chances of success; and while Providence seems smiling upon us, in the latter particular, it is fit that we should do away with any prejudice *that* might result from the former.

This is emphatically a Protestant church. Disregarding, therefore, the details of systematic Theology, upon which Protestants may differ, I have thought it advisable to set forth that in which they ought to agree. In other words, I propose to explain, and to defend the fundamental principals of Protestantism.

To this end, I have selected for my text, the following words:

"*All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness; that the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works.*" 2 Tim. iii, 16–17.

I shall endeavor to maintain, as here taught, the following propositions:

I. The Bible is a creed sufficient, under God's blessing, to regulate the belief, experience, and practice of the whole Christian world.

II. The substitution of any other creed, for either of these purposes, is one step in APOSTACY.

The text mentions four things for which the Bible is profitable, previous to the orderly examination of which, we will ask, *how far* is the Bible profitable? As any other book might be? Or, to some surpassing degree? This our text fully declares.

The man of God, *i. e.*, Pastor, Presbyter, or Bishop (words in the New Testament, convertible), is the one whose office in the Church, being most responsible, involves the most wants; nay, in a manner, *all* the wants of the whole church. For every want which the humblest follower of Jesus feels, the pastor feels, besides those especially arising from his position. The needs and spiritual poverties of the church, center in him. Whatever, therefore, is his thorough furniture for all good works, is, *a fortiori*, the thorough furniture of the church, in all its

parts, and as a whole. It is to him our text declares how, and how far, the Bible may be profitable.

Not so profitable as to supersede study. The context commends Timothy for having *known* the scriptures from childhood. The perfection of a book is to reward, not supersede, study. The Bible possesses no magic virtues, to penetrate through paper and binding, into his fingers, and so imbue his system; the Bible is no talisman, as ghostly fathers taught, to frighten fiends withal; the Bible must be profitable, if at all, by being treated, as books were designed to be treated, according to the laws of book-nature, *i. e.*, by being read, studied, obeyed. Not so profitable, either, as to supersede the use of lexicons, commentaries and traditions. The man of God may use these, according to his means, provided he uses them rightly. How use them? As authoritative interpreters? God forbid! This transfers inspirations out of the Bible into tradition; and the question then is—who shall interpret tradition? Shall he use private judgment to interpret tradition? If we answer, "yes," then, how comes it that private judgment, thus innocent when applied to tradition, is so hurtful when applied to the Bible? If private judgment be a safe guide through an interminable swamp, why not upon an open highway?

If we answer, "no," private judgment must not be trusted, either in the Bible or in tradition; the question returns—who shall interpret tradition? The man of God must get a second authorized interpreter for that; and as it will not do to exercise private judgment in explaining the second, any more than the first, he must get a third authorized interpreter for that; and a fourth for the third; and so on, by a similar necessity; and as he can never arrive at a point where private judgment will be any safer *than it* was at the first step, or at any step after the first, *he will* require an infinite series of authorized interpreters,

which is absurd. Therefore, the plain meaning of the text (divested of Jesuitical cobwebs) is this: Let the man of God use his Bible as a book ought to be used, employing lexicons, commentaries, and traditions, as *servants* to collect evidence, remembering always that the strongest evidence *lies in the text itself*. And when all the evidence is gathered, which can be come at, let him decide in the fear of God. In so doing, the Holy Spirit, by the mouth of Paul, declares, he shall find the Bible, for the uses presently to be considered, profitable to such a degree that therewith alone, he way esteem himself *perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works.*

This is an estimate placed upon his word by Almighty God; not to be whittled down by any device of hardy criticism. It is his three-plied, tripple-folded, defiance to every art of subtle quibbling. Once ascertained what ground is fairly covered by the four specifications, and then, upon that ground, you know that the man of God is "*perfect;*" and if that should, by any possibility, be misunderstood, you know that he is "*thoroughly furnished.*" And if desperate ingenuity should begin to say, "suppose" this, and "suppose that" emergency, under these specifications, it is finally added—"UNTO ALL GOOD WORKS."

What then are these four specifications, and what ground do they fairly cover?

1. "FOR DOCTRINE."—This specification fairly covers the whole ground of the teaching of truth—truth on all subjects necessary to make wise unto salvation. The word *didaskalai*—here rendered "doctrine"—embraces all truth necessary to revelation, and useful to the man of God, as a teacher—all truth which he will be ever called on to understand himself, or to exhibit to others, whether relating to "doctrines," technically so-called, or to ordinances, forms, facts, etc. I maintain that the usage of the New Testament writers fairly includes within this word, the

whole of truth necessary to the edification of the body of Christ; and it means, not only that the Bible is a repository of all such truth, but that when fairly admitted to the mind in the manner already explained, it "*is able*," by an omnipotent energy, "*to make wise unto salvation.*" The Bible is a TEACHER.*

But here an objection is started. Truth, it is said, is one, and, therefore, the fact honest minds do differ on every side, proves that the Bible *is not* a sufficient teacher.

To this I reply: Never was there a more Jesuitical fallacy. You might as well say medicine is one, and therefore, unless men all take the same dose, they never can be cured. The fact is, truth, like medicine, if it be one, is yet multitudinous; and minds, like maladies, are various. Hence it is an utter impossibility to create absolute unity of belief. Even on what we are pleased to term fundamental truths, there must exist different modes of seeing —different grades of believing—different forms of expressing, and the only unity that ever will be attained before the resurrection of the just, on earth, will be the unity of thinking differently, in love. You might as well attempt to compel seven men, with seven glasses, each with a particular hue of the rainbow, to see all things of the same color, on pain of excommunication, as to compell all minds, of ten thousand diverse mental optics, to behold all things of one catholic, leaden hue. You might as well attempt to pack cannon-balls in a box so tightly as to leave no space between them, as to pack minds in a church, I care not by what hierarchical lever you screw them, so tightly that they do not differ, and yet *think.*

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*NOTE.—I remark here, that in speaking of "the Bible alone," I wish to be understood as including those influences of the Holy Spirit, which are solemnly pledged to attend its diligent and careful study.

Leaden balls may be compressed so as to touch all round. And so may heads of the same material.

Consequently, of all the immense delusions that ever bestrode the mind of man with a waking nightmare, that of a church with an absolute unity of opinion, is the most astounding; and of all usurpations of the Divine prerogative, which has ever desolated the church, that of testing church fellowship by *opinion*, instead of by experience and practice, is the most ruinous. Minds differ like faces, like forms, like everything that God ever made, or the Devil ever marred; and the crowning glory of God's word is, that it will, out of its multitudinous, inexhaustible store of truth, fitted to each mind that can be saved, develop that particular truth, yea, that particular shade of the same fundamental truth, necessary to save that mind. The only thing that can—the only thing that does, prevent the Bible from having this effect on every one of you this day, in this house of God, is, you do not read it; you do not wish to be saved by it. You find nothing in it. On you it has no influence—no chance to have any. This is fatal. God's blessed Spirit is so solemnly linked with his word, by covenant and in actual fulfillment, that that word is *able* to give the docile student true views of God, of self, of expiation, reconciliation, life, death, resurrection, and the world to come—views which, though they may differ from mine, are true; and differ from mine only because his mind differs from mine.

Oh! be it ever understood, that the only unity of faith possible to us now, is unity of *reliance* on the divine testimony, with the unimpeded exercise of each mind, irresponsible to the mass, in making an estimate of that testimony. In this view, the Bible is a living miracle among us. It does save men while disputing concerning fundamental truths. The constitutional diversity of minds is so great—the knowledge possible to us so limited—the

parts, and as a whole. It is to him our text declares how, and how far, the Bible may be profitable.

Not so profitable as to supersede study. The context commends Timothy for having *known* the scriptures from childhood. The perfection of a book is to reward, not supersede, study. The Bible possesses no magic virtues, to penetrate through paper and binding, into his fingers, and so imbue his system; the Bible is no talisman, as ghostly fathers taught, to frighten fiends withal; the Bible must be profitable, if at all, by being treated, as books were designed to be treated, according to the laws of book-nature, *i. e.*, by being read, studied, obeyed. Not so profitable, either, as to supersede the use of lexicons, commentaries and traditions. The man of God may use these, according to his means, provided he uses them rightly. How use them? As authoritative interpreters? God forbid! This transfers inspirations out of the Bible into tradition; and the question then is—who shall interpret tradition? Shall he use private judgment to interpret tradition? If we answer, "yes," then, how comes it that private judgment, thus innocent when applied to tradition, is so hurtful when applied to the Bible? If private judgment be a safe guide through an interminable swamp, why not upon an open highway?

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Oh! be it ever understood, that the only unity of faith possible to us now, is unity of *reliance* on the divine testimony, with the unimpeded exercise of each mind, irre[illegible] the mass, in making an estimate of that [illegible] this view, the Bible is a living miracle [illegible] save men while disputing concerning [illegible]. The constitutional diversity of minds [illegible] possible to us so limited—the

themes in question so vast—our logical medium so imperfect, that it is probable good men often rank on opposite sides of apparently fundamental questions, when God sees that as to what is really fundamental, they agree.

I can well conceive, and I rejoice in the thought, that the love of our Lord Jesus Christ, whose name be forever blessed, has kindled like a pure altar-flame, never to be extinguished to all eternity, in the hearts of men, whose intellects could never agree in rendering a philosophical account, either of his person or work. They may have thought their theories fundamental, and have achieved great renown in battling therefor; while God saw that the things they learned of Jesus that made them love him, although so simple as to be quite overlooked in the arena, were eternally fundamental.

Hence the grand work of the man of God is not so much to elaborate truth from the word of God, as to present it in a systematic form for the acceptance of his flock, as coming all glowing from the study of the precious word, unfolding its holy beauties to kindle in their careless hearts a similar ardor, and lead them to the same central sun of life and light. The Bible, then, on all subjects, personal, pastoral, ecclesiastical, which he may be called to handle, is, to the man of God, so boundless a repository, so superior an instructor, that therewith alone, he may regard himself as *perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works.*

2. For Reproof.—This specification fairly covers the whole ground of the prevention, or extirpation of error. In familiar language, the keeping of the church pure from heresy. That this is the force of the term *elegchon*, will be perceived by any one who will compare the New Testament usage on this word and its parent verb. The Bible will not only teach truth—it will kill error. It may not *kill* everything that you and I may consider error. It

certainly will, when used rightly, extirpate what God regards as such, and be it ever remembered that he alone is to pass that sentence. That the Bible will have this effect, follows, of course, from the first specification, for truth and error can not exist together. They are as fire and water. The more truth is taught, the more error dies. This also follows, because the word of God is constructed with direct reference to the cardinal errors of the human mind, by a divine reasoner, with such tremendous ability, that those errors can not live under a conscientious study of the word. This also follows, because the scripture is self-interpreting, self-rectifying, self-vindicating. And the sure way of testing an error claiming scripture support, is—call it to the spot where it claims parentage, and call in the rest of the scripture to testify. In this way erroneous interpretations must die, and do die. And if there be any interpretation that will not die so, then, in God's name, let it live.

Whether, therefore, in a private Christian, or a pastor; whether in the church, or in any other ecclesiastical body, God's estimate of his Bible is, that for the keeping out of heresy, with that alone, the man of God may consider himself *perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works.* How nearly, then, they agree with the mind of God, who think that to have no other test but the Bible, is to swing loose from wholesome restraint, judge ye. For my part, I seem to see the stamp of Divine displeasure broadly and crushingly fixed upon any other test, or barrier of error, besides the Bible alone.

3. For Correction.—The third specification naturally covers the entire ground of church discipline, including the whole fabric of church government, whether of members or ministers. This is the usual signification of the term. There is not an offense against Christ, whether in the church simple, or aggregate, which can not be brought

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to conviction, just as far by the use of the Bible alone, as God ever intended to have it convicted; and if there be an offense which can not be thus convicted, it is not an offense against Christ, but against a human figment, and such an offense—let it be committed. For such purposes, then, with the Bible alone, the man of God is *perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works.*

4. For Instruction in Righteousness.—This fourth and last specification fairly covers the whole ground of training, or schooling, or education in personal holiness, commonly called experimental religion.

God's estimate of his Bible is, that when used according to its own requirements, it will develop all Christian growth—patience, faith, hope, love, joy, meekness, gentleness, integrity, purity, practical morality.

What book is best to put in the hands of a child? Whose words are best for infant voices to repeat? "The words of the Lord are pure words." Can you find any simpler words than those of him who said, "Suffer little children to come unto me, and forbid them not, for of such is the kingdom of heaven?" Can anything more happily fashion the minds of your children, intellect, imagination, taste, feeling, principle and all, than the holy strains of David? And why should it not be so? Can not he, who is the Father of us all, attemper his language to the wants of those little ones, "whose angels in heaven do always behold the face of our Father, who is in heaven?" And whom will you trust to tell them the story of our Lord's suffering and death—their cause and their results? Suppose Jesus, as of old, a wayfaring man, should enter your house, and drawing your children to his arms, should tell them of the Last Supper—of that garden agony—of that mock trial—of those insults, buffetings, scourgings—those final scenes of Calvary—those three days and three nights in the heart of the earth, bending the while upon the

breathless listeners those fascinating eyes of tenderness, would you dare to interrupt him? Would you dare to caution your children what doctrine they should find there?

Parents of this congregation, try the power of God's word upon the pliant natures of your children. Plant those living words deep. Govern them the while. *Live* Christ before them, and when you are old and gray-headed, you shall surely see them following "wisdom's ways, which are pleasantness, and all her paths which are peace." Infidelity can not entangle them; vice can not fasten her fangs upon them; or if they do, you will see them escape again, like a bird from the snare of the fowler. The Bible can never be outgrown. Other books that please our infant ear, fall off and grow stale to our maturer age. Not so with God's words. Precisely the same passage that charmed the child of seven, will charm the gray-haired sage of seventy—yea, open to him depths of meaning that childhood could not fathom.

Christian, commencing the divine life; inquirer, just ready to begin; let me tell you, christianity is growth, not petrifaction. The Christian is the branch of a vine, and that vine is Christ the WORD. If you, then, would be grafted into Christ, I assure you it will not be without diligent, private, original searching of the Bible.

In conclusion, then, see what God's own estimate is of his Bible. For the inculcation of all truth necessary to salvation; for the refutation of error, and extirpation of heresy; for the conduct of discipline, whether of presbyters or laity; for the education of children and adults in personal holiness, and practical morality, the Bible is so far profitable that therewith the man of God is *perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works.*

This, men and brethren, is the estimate that, with all lowliness, we accept and verify. This is the fundamental principle on which this enterprise was commenced, avowed

from the very first, on which every advancement has been made—on which, under God's blessing, our future success is to depend. If you seek to know the doctrines, the spirit, the character of this enterprise from afar, by some human mask, or badge, or insignia, you will surely be at a loss what to think of us. But, if you are a student of God's word; if you know what it is to subject your intellect to the mind of God; if you have ever been taught how to read, and think, and believe only at first hand, from God's beloved word; if, believing, you have obeyed, and if you ever then come within the sound of this temple, you will know at once who you are, and what you are. Your heart will leap to us by the mighty response of a kindred nature, and you will be to us a brother.

Brethren, this is, shall I say, PROTESTANTISM? Nay, there is a nobler word, CHRISTIANITY. The principle I have this day exhibited, is the foundation of Christianity. The realization of this principle is our life. For no other principle is it worth our while to contend; but for this, "the faith once delivered to the Saints," let us contend earnestly. Let us hold up our standard on high. Let us send abroad our watchword upon the wings of the wind! Let us make it known, and felt, and believed, that the Bible, as God wrote it, every man his own interpreter, responsible only to God, is our rule, our only teacher, and that therein, for all truth to be inculcated, all error to be extirpated, all discipline to be enforced, all holiness to be attained, we as a people and a pastor, do deem ourselves PERFECT, *thoroughly furnished unto all good works.*

SERMON XXVIII.

CREEDS.

BY REV. CHARLES BEECHER.

PART II.

In the further consideration of the subject this morning, presented to your view, having already established the first proposition, viz: "The Bible is a creed, sufficient, under God's blessing, to regulate the belief, experience, and practice of the whole Christian world," I now proceed to establish the second, viz:

The substitution of any other creed for any of these purposes, is one step in APOSTACY.

But what is the substitution of any other creed? Not the publishing, in book form, of a system of doctrines, which any man, or body of men, suppose to be contained in the Bible. It is right to compare, to harmonize, to systematize; it is right to publish, to defend, to propagate. This is not what we mean by substitution.

Nor is it the mere publication, defense and propagation of a book, by any man, or body of men, as containing the system of doctrines taught in the Bible. That this would be an unwise presumption, I must believe. Man's mind is finite; the teachings of the Bible infinite. How can men, then, grasp the system, while their minds are physically too small? Humbly must we confess, that there is scarce a question started in God's word, which does not depend for its complete solution, on facts and relations unseen, which does not revolve in an orbit so vast, that the small arc we see, can not afford the elements neces-

sary to form a calculation; which does not sweep out far beyond our horizon, and link in with invisible emergencies.

Hence, to pronounce the results of the research of three score years and ten, THE system, is a daring deed; as daring, as for the astronomer to say, this is *the* system of astronomy, ignorant, as yet, on what unknown path, about what unknown center, our sun is traveling; as daring as for the geologist to say, this is THE system of the earth, ignorant, as yet, of what is twenty miles below the surface; as daring as for the chemist, or the physiologist, to say, this is THE system of chemistry, or physiology, ignorant as yet, of the nature of electricity, or the vital principle; or rather as daring as for an Academy of Sciences to come forward and say, this is THE system of universal science, while there is not a science in the sisterhood yet out of swaddling bands.

Would not these exhibit presumption? But if the Bible be of God, is it not vast as Nature? And is it not a precisely similar presumption to say, this is THE system of doctrines contained in the Bible? How much more fitting to say, "These are parts of his ways; but the thunder of his power, who can understand?" Yet, however we may censure such a course as unwise, presumptious—it is not the substitution which we are to examine.

What then is such substitution?

It is, after having presumed to publish such a book, and to say, "THIS IS THE system of doctrines contained in the word of God," to go farther, and require the acceptance of that book, by every candidate for licensure or ordination, as a test of his qualification. It is this, which I shall attempt to show is one step in APOSTACY.

1. Because it is a direct contradiction of the unequivocal teaching of the Holy Ghost.

The estimate which God has set upon his word is, the

man of God who sincerely receives and adopts the Bible in the best exercise of his natural faculties of interpretation, is "PERFECT, *thoroughly furnished unto all good works.*"

We contradict this. We virtually declare, that the man of God, who sincerely receives and adopts the Bible, in the best exercise of his natural faculties of interpretation, is NOT perfect; NOT thoroughly furnished unto all good works. Nay, he is so *im*perfect, so poorly furnished that we will not license, nor ordain him. That is to say, he shall suffer the natural inconvenience and penalty that such refusal inevitably will bring.

Having thus virtually annulled God's statute, and affixed a penalty to the obedience of it, we set up our own statute, viz: The man of God, who sincerely receives and adopts the Bible AND THIS CREED, according to the best of his natural faculties in interpreting them, is PERFECT, *thoroughly furnished unto all good works!*

This is what must strike every unprejudiced mind as real apostacy. Let me illustrate. Compare this with a well-known feature of the Romish apostacy. The Bible declares that there is one mediator between God and man, Jesus Christ the righteous, and that there is salvation in none other; that his blood cleanseth from all sin, etc. What, in this cardinal point, is the very gist of Roman apostacy? Denying Christ? No. Denying that he is the Mediator? No. What then? She adds other mediators—the Virgin and the Saints. This is recognized by all Protestants as the very essence of her apostacy on this point. But, men and brethren, I submit to you whether the case in hand be not precisely parallel. God declares that the man of God, who sincerely receives and adopts the Bible, is PERFECT, for certain specified purposes. We declare that the man of God who sincerely receives and

adopts the Bible and THIS CREED, is perfect for the same specified purposes.

God declares that Christ, as a Mediator, is perfect. Rome declares that Christ and the saints, as Mediators, are perfect. Now, if the latter be apostacy, why not the former? Do not we and Rome, so far, stand on precisely similar ground?

2. But I judge it to be a real step in apostacy, because it has arisen, and is advancing, in the same mysterious, stealthy way, out of the midst of good men, and good motives, that saint-worship arose. The rise of saint-worship was prophesied by St. Paul, as a revival, under a Christian dress, of the ancient Pagan worship of good demons. 1 Tim. iv, 1.

Now, how was it brought about, in its earliest stages? By bold, bad men? By a general vote of apostacy? Ah, no! These "hypocritical liars," with "consciences seared as with a redhot iron," mentioned by the apostle, were the product and the support of the mature, fullgrown apostacy, stalking forth a grim and gastly ghost of defunct Paganism, evoked from hell, and clad in the fleecy vestments of the Lamb.

The stupendous mystery of Satanic skill was, that he contrived to have martyrs substituted for discarded demons, by the pious, unsuspicious co-operation of godly men—men, ready in their turn to become martyrs—they were the unconscious tools, in the hands of the arch-plotters of ruin, to bring about the fatal resurrection of that very old Paganism (under a truly godly form), from whose fires they had barely escaped!

How did it begin?

In a pious and decent respect for the memory of the martyrs. Nothing more. In cherishing and defending their memories. It was fostered, creeping step by step, from affectionate remembrance, to respectful veneration,

to superstitious adoration ; by such men as Eusebius, Theodoret, Basil the Great, Gregory, Nazianzen, Gregory, Nysen, Chrysostom, and almost all the fathers of the fourth and fifth centuries.

Innocently it flourished in their unsuspicious hands, and peacefully and piously it passed, beyond their day, to a horrid consummation.

So it was with fasting from meats.

So it was with forbidding to marry.

So with every feature of the Romish apostacy.

Precisely in the same manner, is this feature of what I must call Protestant apostacy, now arising—creeping stealthily through its first innocent stages, among good men, from good motives; and, precisely in the same manner will it pass beyond our day to a similar consummation.

Our best, most humble, most devoted servants of Christ, are fostering, in their midst, what will one day, not long hence, show itself to be of the spawn of the dragon. They shrink from any rude word against creeds, with the same sensitiveness with which those holy fathers would have shrunk from a rude word against the rising veneration of saints and martyrs, which they were fostering. They would have supposed that he who should have plainly remonstrated with them, and told them that they were taking a step in apostacy, was an enemy to religion. They would have told him, perhaps, he was doing the devil's work, just as our holy fathers, with equal solicitude, say, when one attempts to disclose the necessary tendency of creeds. While, in point of fact, in both cases, it is the holy fathers themselves, who are doing the devil's work. For,

3. This is a radical feature of Romanism, revived under a Protestant form, just as really as saint-worship was a radical feature of Paganism revived under a Christian form. What has been a radical feature of the Romish apostacy from the first, more marked than this one thing, as

admitted by all Protestants, that she claimed the sole right of interpreting the Bible? Has not Rome always, either deprived the people of the Bible altogether, or else set up that ineffable church fog of tradition for an infallible interpreter? And how was it that this celebrated feature of the Romish system took its rise? I answer in the voice of history, by creed-making. It was the creed-making power, which began in the second century, crept slowly and stealthily forward, was first exercised in a general council in the fourth century, which afterward centered in the Vatican, and set its veto on the Bible.

The making of an authoritative creed, to which the clergy were compelled to subscribe, was the first step; the absolute prohibition of the Bible to the people was the last step. The difference between was only the growth of the principle. For the right to dictate what a man shall find in the scriptures, and the right to dictate that he shall find nothing, are one.

Look at the facts. The apostolic churches, during the whole of the first century, had no creed but the Bible. The apostle's creed, even the simplest, oldest, most harmless of the species, was not made by the apostles. "There is," says Mosheim, "indeed, extant, a brief summary of Christian doctrines, called the apostle's creed, and which from the fourth century onward, was attributed to Christ's ambassadors themselves; but at this day, all who have any knowledge of antiquity, confess, unanimously, that this opinion is a mistake, and has no foundation."

And still more, when it was made it was not used as a *test*. It will be observed, that, in this argument, "creed" means not articles of belief, but articles made authoritative *tests*.

There was no such test in existence during nearly the whole of the first two centuries. They never were heard *of* until after *councils* appeared. During the whole of that

time, churches were independent; all members equal. Each church chose her own officers, and each church was a presbytery in itself. The modern forms of presbyteries, synods, and general assemblies, were unknown. The first idea of them was borrowed from the political world by the Greeks, who were versed in such features of civil administration. The idea of an authoritative creed is, therefore, exclusively political. It is not of Christian parentage. "These councils," says Moshiem, "of which no vestige appears before the middle of this (2d) century, changed nearly the whole form of the church, for by them, in the first place, the ancient rights and privileges of the people were very much abridged, and on the other hand, the influence and authority of the bishops were not a little augmented."

By thus consolidating the churches, by delegates, into a political union, was formed a *hierarchy*. For the delegates, little by little, transformed themselves into legislators, and avowed that Christ had given them power to make laws of faith and practice for the people. Things went on gradually until A. D. 325, when the first general council was called, and the first general creed made, viz.: the council of Nice, and the Nicene creed.

How was this council called? By the authority of Christ? By the authority of the church? It was called by the authority of a man who was not even a member of the Christian Church—a man who was an emperor, and that of Rome. The Roman emperor, by his absolute political power, assembled a general council of the Christian church! Three hundred and eighteen bishops, fully settle the doctrines taught in the Bible, banished Arius into Illyra, and compelled his followers to subscribe. Here is the happy origin of authoritative creeds. Had I time I could go on to show you how they multiplied in swarms, creating and fomenting those very divisions they were de-

signed to suppress—part and parcel of that ambitious and apostate *hierarchy*. I would show you how the creed-making power, thus unknown to apostolic time, thus a political idea, thus first generally exercised under a Roman emperor's mandate, became the constant, inspiring spirit of the apostacy in all its stages, and having masked and gagged the Bible with creed upon creed, tradition upon tradition, fable upon fable, lodged at last in the papal chair, and launched imperial thunders against the Bible itself! This is what I mean by saying that the creed-making power was a radical feature of the Roman apostacy; and this power it is that we are now reviving under a Protestant form. For,

4. We are doing the self-same things by which that creed-making power, then and there began, and, strange to say, are using the self-same arguments therefor. What were the Romish arguments, from the days of the Nicene debate, down to the pontifical anathama? They were, truth is one—therefore, true believers can not differ. But they *do* differ. Therefore there is heresy. Heresy must be kept out. Make a creed to keep it out; and as to which side is heresy, "*Quod semper, quod ubique, quod ab omnibus.*" That is, "heresy is the opinion which is in the *minority*." A strange rule in a world where wise heads are certainly not generally in the majority, but a rule eminently convenient and practical. Yes; shear off the troublesome thinkers, and sing stagnant hallelujahs! This by way of keeping the church pure! This has been Rome's policy, mother of harlots! How holily has she protected the *purity of the church!*

Now, unless my ears deceive me, Protestants are using the same arguments; only for "church," read "denomination." We must keep the denomination pure! We must keep out heresy; i. e., the opinion of the minority; and although God has said his Bible is *perfect* for this

very purpose, we say, no. We want a creed to boot. And is not this just the same as it was when Rome said it? Was saint-worship any better than demon-worship? Is denomination creed-power any better than Catholic creed-power?

5. Especially when we consider that the Protestant church is making progress toward the same results, a virtual prohibition of the Bible—progress more silent, but more rapid. Let one fact suffice.

When the Westminster Assembly of divines formed their confession of faith and catechisms, it was proposed by the Scots Commissioners that the answers of the shorter catechism should be subscribed by the members of that body; the proposal was rejected, after discussion, as an *unwarrantable imposition;* and not for forty years was subscription made a test of ministerial standing.*

Three hundred and twenty-five years were necessary to produce the Nicene creed; but it took one Protestant denomination only forty years to turn what their assembly scouted as an "unwarrantable imposition," into an iron rule! This shows the rapid movement of Protestant apostacy. At this rate, how long before the ultimatum? Do you say it is impossible that creeds such as ours, in the hands of such good men, such holy men, so busy in spreading the Bible everywhere, can yet result in the prohibition of that Bible?

I answer that the Nicene creed was as good as our creeds, and the Nicene fathers as holy men; but they ended in a prohibition of the Bible. So shall we, unless

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*NOTE.—Duncan on Creeds, pp. 53, 54—a work which should be read by every young candidate for the ministry, who desires to see a masterly treatment of the subject.

we stop short; yea, even though it should rain Bibles. For—

6. The creed-system is now exerting upon the clergy of the Protestant churches, a secret, unsuspected, but tremendous power against the Bible—a power of *fear*. Yes, while it professes to venerate and defend the Bible, it is virtually undermining it. That is always Satan's way. He revived Pagan worship in the midst of men who were fierce against it! How? He cheated them! He baptized it. They thought it was pious. So we, busy in fighting Rome, wide awake to see that she does not snatch our Bibles and burn them, we are yet letting *him* cheat us out of them in a new way, a pious way. We do not see him. Oh! that God might unscale our eyes before it be too late! or our Bible will be dead and buried, and hope lost! Do you ask me to explain this mystery? Reflect a moment. Who are our Protestant ministry? How are they ushered on the stage?

They generally go from the bosom of the family to college, without seeing the world at all. There they are secluded for four years, which seem in after-life like an Elysian dream. Thence they step directly into the theological seminary; and thence, after three years more of seclusion, into the pulpit.

What chance have they to know the world? All they have known is *home*, and seven years of sequestered study. What do they know of business? What do they know of men and things, and the stern struggles of life? They go forth, in a majority of cases, babes in worldly wisdom—rich, perhaps, in literary lore, in piety, and purity; but ah! wholly unaccustomed to buffet the wild world's waves. The severest crisis of their whole life, is when they are beginning the lesson of practical life. They are dependent, hopelessly dependent, on their profession. Like new-fledged *birds*, they have never fairly tried their wings. Sensitive,

sincere, timorous, naturally anxious for success, in suspense, the least professional failure strikes like a knell at their heart.

I have heard my father say, that when a situation was first offered him, he felt as though, if he failed in that, he never should have another chance as long as he lived. And this, you will perceive, is but the natural effect of their training.

Now, what sort of an ordeal is prepared for them in society? *i. e.*, religious society, for they know no other. Let us see:

The religious world has what is called a public sentiment of its own, and this formed chiefly by the great evangelical denominations. Other denominations are, owing to their paucity of numbers, less perceived. By one or the other of these denominations, the first fact is, the young candidate is to be licensed; for public sentiment has settled that an unlicensed preacher is no preacher at all. He must have license, then; all his hopes center on that. But there is not one of these great evangelical denominations from which he can get license, unless he will subscribe the creed of that denomination. In other words, the Protestant evangelical denominations have so tied up each other's hands, and their own, that, between them all, a man can not become a preacher at all, anywhere, without accepting some book besides the Bible.

It is true, each denomination says, "We inflict no penalty—we only decline to receive into our ranks, one who does not agree with us." And this is so specious, it sounds so reasonable, that it might deceive the very elect; but it is the most consummate stroke of infernal craft, and doubly-distilled Jesuitism.

It is like Rome handing over the victims of the inquisition to the civil arm, charging it to do them no harm, and then piously lauding her own lamb-like disposition.

There is nothing imaginary in the statement that the creed-power is now beginning to prohibit the Bible, as really as Rome did, though in a more subtle way. During the whole course of seven years' study, the Protestant candidate for the ministry sees before him an authorized statement, spiked down and stereotyped, of what he *must* find in the Bible, or be martyred. And does any one acquainted with human nature, need to be told that he studies under a tremendous pressure of motive? Is that freedom of opinion?—"The liberty wherewith Christ maketh free?" Rome would have given that. Every one of her clergy might have studied the Bible to find there the pontifical creed on pain of death. Was that "liberty?"

Hence, I say, that liberty of opinion in our theological seminaries, is a mere form. To say nothing of the thumb-screw of criticism, by which every original mind is tortured into negative propriety, the whole boasted liberty of the the student consists in a choice of chains—a choice of hand-cuffs—whether he will wear the Presbyterian hand-cuff, or the Methodist, Baptist, Episcopal, or other evangelical hand-cuff. Hence, it has secretly come to pass that the ministry themselves dare not study their Bible. Large portions thereof are seldom touched. It lies useless lumber, or if they do study and search, they dare not show their people what they find there. There is something criminal in saying anything new. It is shocking to utter words that have not the mold of age upon them.

For through the ministry the same spirit has been conducted to the people. The same penalties hang over them. The denominations are so nearly balanced, the strife for power is so keen between them, every fancied departure from the creed, is seized to make political capital, as really as in any political campaign. Houses must be built; salaries must be raised. This requires wealth. Wealth requires numbers and patronage. This creates a servile

dread of novelty, for everything that another party can get hold of, strikes at the gold. Therefore, the people watch the minister, and the minister is afraid of the people. For, if he studies independently, if he goes outside of the creed, if he slips the hand-cuff, the people tremble — it will not please—the opposition will seize it—we shall be unpopular—we shall not succeed!

Oh, woful day! Oh, unhappy church of Christ! Fast rushing round and round the fatal circle of absorbing ruin! Thou sayest I am rich, and increased in goods, and have need of nothing; *knowest not* that thou art poor and miserable, and *blind* and *naked!*

Thus are the ministry of the evangelical, Protestant denominations, not only formed all the way up, under a tremendous pressure of merely human fear, but they live, and move, and breathe, in a state of things radically corrupt, and appealing every hour to every baser element of their nature, to hush up the truth, and bow the knee to the power of apostacy. Dimly does every one now and then see that things are going wrong. With sighs does every true heart confess that rottenness is somewhere, but ah! it is hopeless of reform. We all pass on, and the tide rolls down to night.

The time has come when men having itching ears, and forms of godliness, without the power, are heaping to themselves teachers, but they will not endure sound doctrine, but are turned aside unto fables. And the whole has come about stealthily, no body knows how, among good men, out of good motives.

Was not this the way things went with Rome? Are we not living her life over again? And what do we see just a head? Another General Council! A world's convention! evangelical alliance, and a universal creed!

And what then is to be done? I know not what others may say, but if ever I shrink from declaring that the

Bible, the whole Bible, and nothing but the Bible, is the perfect and thorough furniture of the Christian minister, and Christian Church, then may my right hand forget her cunning, and my tongue cleave to the roof of my mouth.

Brethern, you see the standard that has been unfurled this day. What will you do? It is the standard of the cross. It is the banner of the Spirit of the Lord! Rally around it. Away with your fears of other denominations. Away with false policy! Rally around this central principle, look to the Lord, and you are impregnable. The waves of the coming conflict which is to convulse christendom to her center, are beginning to be felt. The deep heavings begin to swell beneath us. "All the old signs fail." "God answers no more by Urim and Thummim, nor by dream, nor by prophet." Men's hearts are failing them for fear, and for looking after these things that are coming upon the earth. Thunders mutter in the distance. Winds moan across the surging bosom of the deep. All things betide the rising of that final storm of divine indignation which shall sweep away the vain refuges of lies. When "the Lord shall cause his glorious voice to be heard, and shall show the lightning down his arm, with the indignation of his anger, and with the flame of a devouring fire; with scatterings, and tempest, and hailstones,"—in that day, what shall save us? For judgment will begin at the house of God. What shall be our defense? Put your trust in him, whose eyes are as a flame of fire, on whose head are many crowns, who is clothed with a vesture dipped in blood, whose name is called THE WORD OF GOD! For, "behold! a king shall reign in righteousness, and princes rule in judgment, and A MAN shall be as a hiding-place from the wind, and a convert from the tempest!" Even so, Lord Jesus! Come quickly!—AMEN.

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Taking advantage of these facts some have attempted to argue that the course of the devout Christian, for all time to come, is here definitely pointed out. That course they say is *to quietly submit* to all laws—"every ordinance of man"—for the Lord's sake. Our business they say, is to do what is required of us, and it extends in their view, no farther. Hence some will have nothing whatever to do with the politics of their country. But we can not so easily escape from a great responsibility. In considering the force of New Testament requirements the circumstances surrounding the individuals upon whom a command is laid, are never to be disregarded. We must study our relations, and get a clear understanding of our surroundings before we can ascertain whether any law is binding upon us. Because capital punishment is denounced against murder we do not expect every man to be hung. Only those who are guilty of the crime are to be the subjects of the punishment. So it is with the divine law. Its punishments are denounced only against the guilty. Its commands are designed to correct those in error, and to guide the righteous that his foot may not slip. The complete force of these commands is only to be understood in the light of the circumstances by which we are surrounded.

Our relations, and those of the people of most Christian nations, toward their respective governments, are vastly different from those of the people to whom these apostlic injunctions were given. Then Christians were despised and rejected of men—particularly of those in power. They had not a representative of their pure and holy principles among the sovereign powers of earth. Their influence was completely unfelt. To have sought redress peaceably or forcibly, would have been sheer madness. Hence they are exhorted to obedience, not as a measure of policy, but of duty. At this time things are not so arranged. In

many countries Christians are in the ascendant; and Christianity is responsible for the formation of public opinion, and this opinion controls the government. In our own country the genius of the government invites the co-operation of religion in doing good for man. As Christian men, then, we have a right—nay, it is a solemn obligation—to demand that our constitutions shall be framed, and our laws enacted and enforced in accordance with Christian principles. This obligation we can not escape. If we have an opportunity to control the government, and to wield its great powers in behalf of God, and humanity, and we neglect that opportunity, we shall not be guiltless in the sight of the great Judge. In this land such an opportunity is offered us. No man, then, whatever may be his calling, is exempt from this important duty to his country.

It was the duty of the ancient Christians to obey all laws which they could not hope to change, and which did not conflict with their moral obligations, and not to resist their enforcement, striving unto blood. Likewise it is our duty, as Christians, to obey the laws of our country; but it is no less a Christian duty to use every lawful effort to make all these laws conform to the letter and spirit of our holy religion. No American citizen can be a good Christian, unless he is thus far a *politician*.

Those who are so clamorous for the complete silence of the pulpit on political questions, have forgotten the history of the early church. They represent truly the sentiments of the apostles when they quote their language, urging their disciples to obedience to civil rulers. But they seem to have forgotten that at the time some of these most earnest exhotations were being penned, hundreds and thousands of the disciples were openly disregarding the laws of the empire. *They* took a sufficient interest in politics to let their magistrates know that their obligations to the

great King would not allow them to obey certain laws then attempting to be enforced. Their resistance to these laws cost them their lives by the most cruel tortures. And the apostles, with the spirit of inspiration resting upon them, so far from rebuking them, rather encouraged them, and said, "If any man *suffer* as a *Christian* let him glorify God on this behalf." If, then, the primitive Christians were allowed, without rebuke, openly to resist the laws of their country, even to death, surely Christian men, and ministers ought to be allowed peaceably to express their opinions, especially when the mere holding of their opinions is a matter of religious responsibility, and the expression of them may do something for the good of our common country. If the consciences of any will not allow them to listen to ministers thus publicly avowing their opinions, they ought to reflect that ministers themselves have consciences which often prompt them to the performance of unpleasant duties.

No Christian man, or Christian preacher can live in the full discharge of his duty while withholding from his fellow-men his counsel and assistance, in times of trouble and distress.

Such are the times upon which our unhappy country has now fallen. Our Chief Magistrate has notified the Congress of these troubles, officially proclaiming that we are "*in the midst of a revolution.*" And truly, so it seems. Our fathers laid the foundations of this government in their blood. It is now threatened that its *ruins* shall be sprinkled with the blood of their children. Once the institutions of their beloved country, and the union of the states were as dear to the hearts of the people as their own cherished household idols. *Now*, it is not so. Once it was universally acknowledged that the value of this union did not admit of computation. As no one allowed himself to count the worth of the family union, to esti-

mate, in dollars and cents, the value of his father's blessing, and his mother's love—so no one dreamed of estimating the value of the union of the states—a union cemented by a common language, a common lineage, a common religion, and a common history. We were born in the same family, rocked in the same cradle, and passed through the same difficulties. We have been united in the council-chamber, and on the battlefield. The blood of northern and southern patriots flowed in the same stream, and their ashes lie mingled in the same grave. Once the whole people felt the force of such union arguments as these. Now, alas! for the times on which we have fallen! all these things are disregarded. Now the union of the states is openly denounced as useless and oppressive. And three states of this confederacy, rising up in their sovereign capacities, have declared that they are no longer holden of its bonds. Certainly we are in the midst of great events. Well may this be reckoned a time of fear and trembling. Men's hearts are failing them while they watch the progress of these important events. Ours seems to be the melancholy privilege of witnessing the dismemberment of that confederacy for whose union our fathers prayed, and labored, and suffered. Nor is the dissolution of the union and the destruction of the proudest political fabric ever reared by the hands of man, the only, nor the worst spectacle which the men of this generation seem born to behold. Melancholy as such an event must be when viewed in the most favorable light, and terrible as must be its effect on the progress of the race, its terror is invested with a ten-fold more terrible aspect when viewed as the immediate precursor of civil war. Yet such are now the indications furnished by the progress of secession. It would be a sad enough spectacle for the future students of history to witness in our peaceable dis-

memberment the failure of the experiment of self-government, when tried by a great nation.

But with what crushing force must the news of such an event fall upon the newly kindled aspirations in the hearts of millions now struggling to be free. With what heart can Patriotism ever again strike for freedom and the rights of man, if it must view, as the probable result of all its toils and sufferings, a beloved country "drenched in fraternal blood?" And who can endure the picture which a state of actual war must present in our own land? Yet such is the spectacle now about to be presented to our view. The first blow has already been struck. The first shot has been fired in anger between the children of this great family of states. The dogs of war seem already to have been set loose upon us. It becomes us, then, as Christian men, to stop and consider—to look this state of things full in the face, and see what remedy can be provided. What can we do to restore peace to our distracted country? How shall we conduct ourselves to heal the wounds already inflicted, and to prevent a recurrence of this sad state of things? Certainly every dictate of reason and religion would say to us that if *our* crimes have produced this state of trouble and distraction, we should repent in sackcloth and ashes. Every thing that can be done should at once be done to preserve this great and glorious confederation of states. Whatever, then, reason requires, whatever religion will sanction, whatever the glory of God and the good of humanity demands, we are pledged, as subjects of the Prince of Peace, as lovers of law and order, as friends of all mankind, at once to grant.

But before attempting to prescribe remedies for any disorder, the intelligent physician will first take its diagnosis. Several questions must be answered. What is the nature of the disorder? What has produced it? What has al-

ready been done to stay its progress? And what course shall we pursue in its treatment for the future?

Thus, then, let us first take briefly the diagnosis of our national disorder. What, then, is the nature of the complaint? It is simply a conflict of interests. One section complains that its rights have been violated, and its dearest interests disregarded in the federal compact. It charges the other with a restless, domineering spirit, disposed to seek its own interests at the expense of all others. It asserts that there is such a conflict between these and its own interests that both can not be subserved in one compact. Hence an immediate separation is urged as the only remedy. It is replied by the other section that the grievances complained of are not real grievances, but the natural result of the diseased state of the parts. They declare that a redress of these supposed grievances would by no means restore the patient to perfect health, but rather inflict upon it a *constitutional* debility for life. To be more plain, the whole burden of the cries and complaints now being borne to our ears by every gale that comes from the South, is that their rights have been grossly violated. These rights are the protection and spread of African slavery. The unwillingness of the North to grant these is the great grievance now complained of. To vindicate these rights a dissolution of the government is threatened, and actually undertaken. To this the North replies that our government is one of freedom. That it originally, in the minds of its framers, contemplated, not the spread, but rather the extirpation of human bondage. And that to administer the government with this view is not to aggrieve any portion of it, but rather to help it on in the accomplishment of the object for which it was originally projected and instituted. This is the present condition of our august patient. There is surely a direct antagonism here, and these two sections, if allowed freely to act upon

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each other, must sooner or later produce a terrible state of disorder.

Let us now inquire, in the second place, what has produced this disease? The authorities differ upon this point. A venerable writer asserts that it is the result of the intemperate interference of the people of the North with the rights and institutions of the South. One more recently asserts that it is caused by that "class of political teachers who belong to the ministry." Some say that it is the election of a President in a constitutional way by a majority of the states. But this is openly asserted every where to be a mere pretense. The real cause of the disorder lies deeper than this. It is the result of the antagonism of the two theories before mentioned. The disorder is a chronic one. The election of a President has only given it a determination to the surface, and caused it to manifest itself in a definite form.

In other words, certain men of the South have long been contemplating just such action as has now been taken by several states. Whenever the Southern portion of the confederacy ceased to rule, it was determined that the confederacy should no longer exist. It was believed that such a crisis had now arrived, and in pursuance of their plan our present troubles and distractions have been brought upon us. These may seem to be bitter words of strife, rather than words of peace and compromise. Yet they are just conclusions from the conduct of prominent statesmen in that section of our country.

That there must necessarily be an antagonism, and probably a conflict between the two great sections of our country, was long forseen by wise and good statesmen. Indeed, it was felt that the very language of the Declaration of Independence, at the time of its adoption, was belied by the state of society in most of the colonies. The question now agitating the public mind, and threatening

the peace, and even the very existence of our government, is not one recently thrust upon us. It embarrassed the very founders of our republic. The studious care with which they avoided all allusion to it in the great organic law of the land, shows how much they were ashamed of the existing state of society. The constitution of the American republic, to the praise of the great minds and greater hearts that conceived it, contains not the word *slave*, nor in express terms a recognition of the institution.

If, then, we inquire, in the third place, what has already been done to stay the progress of that national disease with which we are now afflicted, we shall find that much, very much has been done. Its treatment began with the very formation of the government, and it has been in the hands of the physicians ever since. Would that it had been treated all along by the same rules and according to the same system. This troublesome question is now *forced* upon *us* for our decision. This is the only difference between our relations toward it, and those of our fathers. It was before them as before us; but they put it off by various pretexts. Now the course of events has driven it upon us, and it imperatively demands a settlement. We may as well meet the crisis now as at any future period. To put it off will only have the effect to involve more and greater interests, and will in no wise prepare the people for its final reception. Are the disaffected states, then, deeply aggrieved? Have their rights been grossly violated? Let the history of the nation testify.

It must be allowed that interests somewhat similar to those of the states now seceding, controlled the formation of our government. The position assigned them in the beginning, then, is one of their own selection. Slaveholding interests by special favor obtained an implied sanction by the constitution. In the spirit of this instrument laws were enacted carrying out its provisions. That interest,

thus protected and provided for, grew strong and became insolent. Its representatives were shrewd enough to know the best way of carrying their point. Knowing the devotion of the American people to the Union, they began to make their demands and to suspend the safety of the Union upon a compliance with these demands. Thus was power secured. And for fifty years, in violation of the cherished principles of the fathers, and contrary to the genius of the government, it has been administered predominantly for the benefit of the South. What have we not done to pacify its insatiable spirit and to gain the good will of our Southern brethren? Many of the most important steps that have ever been taken in the administration of the government have been in their favor. We have given to them a domain larger than was possessed by their friends at the adoption of the federal constitution. In 1803 we purchased for them largely, if not exclusively, the Louisiana territory, at a cost of $15,000,000. In 1821 we again gave all they asked, adopting their own proposition and allowing them to go to the limits prescribed by themselves. In 1845 we annexed a state large enough for an empire, all of which was given to their control. In 1846–7 we carried on an expensive and bloody war to make good our claim to this territory. In 1850 we legislated ourselves into a grand police force to assist them in recapturing their fugitive slaves. In 1854 we took down the limit established in 1821, and invited them to go in and possess the land from which they had been excluded. In 1856 we contested with them the control of the government; but they succeeded in getting possession of it. Since then it has been administered for their exclusive benefit, almost. All this have we done for our Southern brethren, for we love them. Yea, and more than this have they received from our hands. We have stood upon the constitution, the work of our venerated fathers, and we have most

solemnly pledged ourselves to sacredly regard every right guaranteed to them by that instrument. And farther yet, we have stepped out in advance of this most reasonable ground, and for *peace'* sake have offered them advantages never contemplated by the federal constitution.

Still our country has no peace. One continual round of agitation possesses her. Now, what is to be done? Our Southern brethren accuse us still of being unfaithful to them. What additional crime have we now committed, and that calls for new acts of humiliation and concession? Our worst crime seems to be our *opinion*. We adhere to different views on the subject of enslaving men from those held among them. We have now got possession, regularly and lawfully, of one department of the government, and we propose to administer it in the interests of freedom, without, however, in any way interfering with their own domestic institutions. This they will not brook!

Now, this, it seems to me, is a fair statement of the case. The slaveholding states have received the most solemn pledges from the power now incoming, that their home interests will not be interfered with. But this is not sufficient for them. They now demand that the party which has just succeeded, lawfully, to the executive department of the government, shall pledge themselves to administer the same, as heretofore, in their interest, and that they shall give to them pledges and guarantees never before demanded—thus virtually abandoning all principle, and leaving the government as they found it. For the purpose of enforcing this demand they call conventions, pass secession ordinances, take possession of the public defenses, and in every way hinder the execution of the federal laws.

This is the position in which things are now placed. Every condition of a civil revolution now exists in our midst. Lately our ears were made to tingle and our

hearts to ache, by the intelligence that hostilities had actually been begun. Are we to have a civil war in our midst? Must our pruning-hooks be beaten into spears, and our plowshares into swords? Shall our fruitful fields lie uncultivated while we go out to the wars? Shall our churches become winter-quarters for soldiers, or be used as hospitals for the wounded and dying? Shall the altar of God thus be desecrated by the blood of our brothers and our kinsmen, shed by our own unhallowed hands? In one word, could any thing more terrible happen to us than the frightful ravages of *intestine war?* One darker picture, and one only remains. It would be more destructive to the material interests of this fair land, more injurious to our moral purity and social peace, and to the onward progress of the entire race, in civilization, in enlightenment, in Christian light and love, should this nation become the patron of the institution of African slavery, than that freedom—glorious, heaven-born liberty—should triumph at the expense of a five years' war. Most earnestly do we pray, God save us from war; but still more earnestly, God preserve the nation from the universal spread of the curse of slavery.

The object of the present violent demonstrations at the South seems to be to spread the institution over the entire land. Their most moderate men offer as the ultimatum—the least that they can possibly accept—that we shall acknowledge the *right of property* in man, and make laws *every where* to protect that right. Shall we receive this proposition, and act upon it for the purpose of restoring peace to the country? As Christian men and lovers of peace, we should make every concession in our power to avert the awful calamity of war and bloodshed. But, for one, I say NO to all such propositions as affirm one man's right to own another. "*None but God can own a man!*" *This* I say not in the spirit of pretended statesmanship,

for I am a man of small experience and less pretentions to political wisdom, but I utter my solemn convictions as a Christian and a servant of the God of all peace. It is useless further to compromise away this issue. Nay, it is worse than useless, it is criminal; for if it is not speedily settled, thousands more must suffer by it than can be made to suffer by it now. This question comes not within the domain of compromise. Did it involve only a question of government policy, such as the Tariff, the United States Bank, or an Internal Improvement system, then any thing —every thing—might be sacrificed to preserve the integrity of the federal compact. But this question involves the very spirit of the government, and is a matter of conscience with those called to act upon it.

Let no man accuse us of a desire to inflame the passions of men. On the contrary, we desire peace and tranquillity. We most earnestly beseech our Southern neighbors to consider the awful importance of the step they are taking, and not to act rashly in this matter of drawing the sword against their brethren. Again we solemnly pledge ourselves to act in the spirit of the fathers, and to do even more than they contemplated for peace' sake. But to adopt their institution, and to aid in spreading it over this fair land, is more than our religion, and the fear of our fathers' God will allow us to do. We have done much for them, and are willing to do much more. They are our kindred, in the flesh and in the spirit. We compassionate —we do not blame them. We know many of their hearts beat in unison with our own. We would gladly extend to them the hand of brotherly love and friendship. But with all our interest in them we can not be blind to their faults. We humbly entreat them to forsake these faults, and if they will not, we have, at least, done our duty. We can only pray the God of all peace and comfort to regard them in

mercy, and in his own good time to enlighten them and lead them in the way of humanity and justice.

But in the midst of all our darkness and doubt, I sincerely believe we are about to realize the truth of the text, "*The night is far spent, the day is at hand.*"

The crisis now upon us is God's work. A Providential hand is in it.

The men of the South say that the day of compromise is past. And so it seems. They are determined to precipitate the destruction of that institution for whose benefit this rash act has been done. In any event the condition of the *servant* must be better. Slavery belongs to a past civilization. It is incompatible with the present state of Christian enlightenment. This incompatibility is now manifested in the present crisis. Only let the true, liberty-loving men of the North stand firmly on the ground they have taken, holding out the olive branch of peace to all belligerents, but refusing to compromise away their principles, and the good work will go bravely on. God sees not as we see. Hours of darkness and trouble may come upon us, but they are that darkest hour which precede the full blaze of the morning. Our danger lies in compromise. Not in the true spirit of compromise—the spirit of the constitution; but that kind of compromise which is all on one side—where the interests of freedom are constantly sacrificed to an insatiate despotism. When we give more for an article than it is worth, we have made a bad commercial transaction. We should beware that we do not make a similar political bargain. Great as are the benefits of union, and ardently as we desire to preserve it, there is yet a possibility of paying too high a price for it. It will cost too much to coerce a union, and it would be only a union in name were it thus obtained. It is likewise purchasing union at too great a sacrifice to prostitute all its powers to the spread of slavery.

Our duty is thus made clear. If southern states can not and will not remain in the union, let them *peaceably* withdraw from us. If, however they attempt to destroy the government, and make it useless for the remaining states, and in this mad attempt draw the sword against their brethren, the integrity of the government must be preserved. The consequences will fall upon their own heads. In these troublous times we have nothing left us but a firm reliance upon God, and an active discharge of our duties toward our fellow-men. The Lord is working wonders among the powers of earth. The peasant soldier of Italy has waked the dormant energies of his country, and breathed the spirit of liberty into the hearts of oppressed millions. An invitation to Victor Emmanual, the *Conquering Saviour* of Italy, is placarded in the Eternal City, and that old Man of Sin, who first united the crown and the mitre, grasped the scepter and the crosier and joined the throne to the altar, is now trembling for the fate of his temporal possessions.

The Sun of Liberty has shone gloriously on our own land. But all the while it was a partial eclipse. Now for a time it may be shrouded in clouds and darkness; yet ere long, let us trust God, it will break forth with a splendor hitherto unknown. These revolutions can not go backward. Man must recognize the rights of his fellow-man. Every being made in the image of God must yet feel the influence of a liberal government and a pure religion, and then the Millennium will have fully come. These things are hastening on apace. "*The night is far spent, the day is at hand.*" God grant that its glorious light may soon burst upon us—that our ears may soon be saluted by the Jubilee Anthem of the enfranchised nations of earth. May we speedily attain to that exalted and radiant period in man's history when the idea of a complete civil and religious liberty shall have been realized, when

implements of war shall have been changed to implements of peaceful industry, when the soldier shall forget his craft, when the nations shall learn war no more, when the "wolf also shall dwell with the lamb, and the leopard lie down with the kid, and the calf and the young lion and the fatling together," and the peaceable kingdom of Messiah be all and in all. And now the very God of peace bless our land and make it a blessing; save it from war and bloodshed; unite yet again the hearts of its people, and make it a monument of light and life and heaven-born liberty to the struggling and oppressed millions of earth.

SERMON XXX.

THE TIME TO DANCE.

BY J. M. MATHES.

"A time to weep, and a time to laugh; a time to mourn, and a time to dance."—Ecc. III, 4.

In discoursing to you very briefly upon the above passage, we only propose to discuss the last member of the sentence: "A time to DANCE."

I. When is the time to dance?

II. Is there a time when Christians may lawfully and properly engage in dancing?

To arrive at proper conclusions in regard to the first question, we must refer to the practice of the people of God in ancient times. We shall here refer to some of the most prominent examples of dancing mentioned in the Bible.

"And Miriam, the prophetess, the sister of Aaron, took a timbrel in her hand; and all the women went out after her with timbrels and with dances." Ex. xv, 20.

God had just delivered Israel from their enemies, by leading them, like a flock, through the Red Sea; and the object of the prophetess and the other pious women was, evidently, to celebrate this great national victory by a religious dance, accompanied with the timbrel. It was the custom to praise God on those great national occasions by music and dancing. This was, therefore, "a time to dance." But mark you well, the object was

to praise God, and none but the WOMEN engaged in it. Again,

"And Jephthah came to Mizpeh unto his house, and, behold, his daughter came out to meet him with timbrels and dances; and she was his only child; beside her he had neither son nor daughter." Judges xi, 34.

This case is precisely like the former in its main features. It was a time of rejoicing for a great national victory over their enemies. This young lady, the daughter of the conqueror, went out to meet her victorious father with the timbrel and the dance. No one danced but her, and she did not dance as a mere matter of amusement, but as an act of worship—to praise God.

"Therefore, they commanded the children of Benjamin, saying, Go and lie in wait in the vineyards, and see and behold if the daughters of Shiloh come out to dance in dances, then come ye out of the vineyards, and catch every man his wife of the daughters of Shiloh, and go to the land of Benjamin." Judges xxi, 21.

From this passage it is evident that it was the practice of the DAUGHTERS of Shiloh to go out into the vineyards and orchards to dance; but no young men were with them. It was a religious exercise, and while thus engaged, they were surprised and carried off by these sons of Benjamin. Again:

"And it came to pass as they came when David was returned from the slaughter of the Philistines, that the women came out of all cities of Israel, singing and dancing, to meet king Saul, with timbrels, with joy, and with instruments of music." 1 Sam. xiii, 6.

This was a proper time to dance, according to the customs of the nation. It was a time of rejoicing for a great victory over their implacable enemies, the Philistines. But you will observe that it was the WOMEN that came out *of the cities* of Israel, not the men; and the WOMEN danced,

not the men. The object of the music and dancing was to honor the king and his great captain, David; and also to praise God for deliverance.

"Praise ye the Lord. Sing unto the Lord a new song, and his praise in the congregation of the saints. Let Israel rejoice in him that made him: let the children of Zion be joyful in their king. Let them praise his name in the dance: let them sing praises unto him with the timbrel and the harp." Ps. cxlix, 1–3.

Nothing can be more definite than the above. "Let them praise his name in the dance." We presume no one will contend that the object of our modern dances is to "praise his name in the dance."

"Thou hast turned for me my mourning into dancing: thou hast put off my sackcloth and girded me with gladness." Ps. xxx, 11.

Here the patriarch David speaks of his mourning being turned into *dancing*. Here "dancing" is used in the sense of "praising God." See also the following passages, viz.: Ex. xxii, 19; Jer. xxxi, 4; Matt. xi, 17; xiv, 6; Luke xv, 25; Job xxi, 7–11. From all which it appears:

1. That dancing was a religious act, both in true and also in idol worship.

2. That it was practiced exclusively on joyful occasions, such as national festivals or great victories.

3. That on such great occasions it was performed only by one of the sexes.

4. That it was performed usually in the daytime—in the open air—in the highways, fields and groves.

5. That the men who perverted dancing from a sacred use to purposes of amusement, were deemed infamous.

6. That no instances of dancing are found upon record in the Bible, in which the two sexes united in the exercise, either as an act of worship or an amusement.

7. That there are no instances upon record in the Bible,

of social dancing for amusement, except that of the "vain fellows, void of shame," alluded to by Michal; or the irreligious families described by Job, which produced increased impiety, and ended in destruction; and of Herodias, which terminated in the rash vow of Herod and the murder of John the Baptist.

II. In answer to our second inquiry, we answer most unhesitatingly, No. The modern dance is an utter perversion of the original design of dancing, and has no such ideas nor designs attached to it now as were connected with it when "David danced, with all his might, before the ark;" or when Miriam, the prophetess, led the women in the dance at the baptism at the Red Sea. Then, the pious and the good were the leaders in the dance; but now, the irreligious, the vain, and the giddy do the dancing. God is not in all their thoughts; and death and the judgment-day are put as far from their thoughts as possible.

The modern dance may be classified with the "works of the flesh," and placed under the head of "REVELING," "rioting," "chambering, and wantonness." See Rom. xiii, 12, 13, and Gal. v, 21. And, of course, Christians can not engage in such vain amusements without sacrificing their Christian influence.

Paul says: "Whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report, etc., think of these things." Phil. iv, 8. Is the modern dance lovely and of good report? It certainly is not; but on the contrary, the religious sense of mankind, in the church and out of it, in all civilized society, is that it is an exercise in which Christians ought not to engage.

But we find our views so well expressed by the venerable B. W. Stone, that we will make an extract from his article on dancing, viz:

"1. I never knew a praying, holy, or pious person, old

or young, fond of such amusements, engage in them or contend for them.

"2. I never saw a church which tolerated such things, exhibit any symptoms of divine life. Instead of exerting a good influence upon the world around them, they were rather a curse than a blessing.

"3. I never knew a mourner in Zion to be comforted with such amusements.

"4. I never saw a person solemnly impressed with the solemnities of death, judgment, and eternity, delight in such trifles." . . . . . .

"6. The good sense of the civilized world has put a veto upon the practice, for who, by searching all the churchyards in Christendom, can find, by the epitaph on the tombstone, a dancing-master's grave, as, 'Here lies A. B., the dancing-master?' No; the gravestone forbids dancing to be inscribed on it."

And we may add, in conclusion, the following suggestions upon the subject:

1. Who ever knew a sinner to be converted from the error of his way at a frolic?

2. Who ever knew a young Christian to be made more serious, devoted, pious, or religious by attending dancing parties?

3. Who ever heard of a young lady or a young gentleman, when prostrated upon the bed of death, sending for the dancing-master to come and converse with them, or cheer them through the dark valley and shadow of death, by dancing? Never. The dancing-master is the very last person that the dying saint or sinner would desire to see in that trying hour! They then want the minister of Christ to be with them, and the pious and the good.

But finally, my young brethren and sisters, I would warn you, as you love God and his cause, and desire to do

[illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [

or young, fond of such amusements, engage [illegible] contend for them.

"2. I never saw a church which tolerated [illegible] exhibit any symptoms of divine life. [illegible] a good influence upon the world around [illegible] rather a curse than a blessing.

"3. I never knew a mourner in Zion [illegible] with such amusements.

"4. I never saw a person solemnly [illegible] solemnities of death, judgment, [illegible] such trifles." . . . . .

"6. The good sense of the civilized [illegible] upon the practice, for who, by [illegible] yards in Christendom, can find [illegible] tombstone, a dancing-master's [illegible] the dancing-master? No, the [illegible] to be inscribed on it."

And we may add, in conclusion, the [illegible] tions upon the subject.

1. Who ever knew a sinner [illegible] error of his way at a frolic?

2. Who ever knew a young [illegible] serious, devoted, pious, [illegible] parties?

3. Who ever heard of [illegible] man, when prostrated [illegible] the dancing-master [illegible] cheer them through [illegible] by dancing? Never [illegible] person that the dying [illegible] that [illegible] hour. [illegible]

good and get to heaven at last, shun the ballroom and all such vain amusements, and follow after righteousness, that you may let your light shine before men.

The Lord bless you all, and keep you from evil. Amen!